



LIMUSISHIDEN (LI DECHUN 李得春)

WITH

CHARLES KEVIN STUART

ASIAN HIGHLANDS PERSPECTIVES 8



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# MONGGHULNI JILAGUNI DA ADAL MONGGHUL MEMORIES AND LIVES

Limusishiden (Li Dechun 李得春)

*with*

Charles Kevin Stuart

*Asian Highlands Perspectives 8*

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Front Cover: This photograph by Limudanzhuu was taken in Tughuan 土官 Village, Danma 丹麻 Town, Huzhu Mongghul Autonomous County (Huzhu tuzu zizhixian 互助土族自治县), Haidong Region (Haidong diqu 海东地区), Qinghai 青海 Province, PR China.

Back Cover: This photograph by Limudanzhuu of Limusishiden's family and Limusishiden's father's three sisters was taken in Tughuan Village.

Summary: Limusishiden (b. 1968) describes his lived experiences and recollections related to language, education, traditional beliefs, and folklore; provides details of his parents, three paternal aunts, and paternal grandparents' lives; describes Tughuan (Tuguan 土官) Village; and reports on a visit to Jija Nuri (Jijialing 吉家岭) Village in 2007 and its rapid cultural transformation, providing unique insights into Mongghul (Tu 土; Monguor) life in Huzhu 互助 Mongghul Autonomous County, Haidong 海东 Region, Qinghai 青海 Province, PR China in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

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## ACCLAIM

This important account of Tuguan Village and the surrounding areas brings a richly textured knowledge of the twentieth century lived experience of this multi-ethnic community. For Tibetan Studies in particular, the Tu/Mongghul world has often been assumed to have been a Tibetan Buddhist world; Mongghul incarnations of the Lcang skyā and Tukwuan (Tuguan) Lamas are mistakenly discussed as though they were no different than ethnic Tibetans. Dr. Limusishiden's narrative makes clear that the area under the control of the Tuguan lama was distinctly Mongghul. Hopefully, Tibetan scholars will explore what this might tell us about the distinctive contributions of this ethnicity to Tibetan religious literature and life (they remain active in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries today). Other fascinating aspects of this study include the demographics, including sparse human populations threatened by wolves in the region as late as the 1940s; and the social lives of the community, especially the details of marital relations, the difficult lives of women, and the material and oral culture of the region. A wonderful read and a fitting tribute to the memory of this important scholar and doctor. *Gray Tuttle, Leila Hadley Luce Assistant Professor of Modern Tibetan Studies, Columbia University*

*Mongghul Memories and Lives* is a unique work of auto-ethnography penned by a member of the Mongghul (Tu) ethnic group of northwest China. Through personal narrative, anecdote, and rigorous annotation, Dr. Limusishiden relates the family folklore of several generations of his relatives, intertwining minute

descriptions of local customs and performance genres with illuminating slices of genealogy and oral history. Spanning pivotal decades of individual and cultural transformations, this richly illustrated account is a resource for future generations of Mongghul people and gives non-locals unique access to a dynamic society located at the crossroads of several cultures. *Mark Bender, The Ohio State University*

*Mongghul Memories and Lives* is a wonderfully eclectic mix of autobiography, ethnography, family history, and descriptive sociolinguistics. The honesty of the straightforward story-telling reaches across the temporal and cultural divide, bringing into plain view a world not well-known to most readers of English. One cannot but be awed by the account of 'rich man' Grandfather's experiences with the Chinese language, and the Chinese state. In this story, but also found in many others in the text, the grand flows of historical change wash against the lived human condition. *Keith Dede, Lewis & Clark College*

This remarkable memoir of the inner Asian borderlands includes a rich ethnography of a people and culture on the cusp of major economic and social change. Limusishiden and Kevin Stuart have captured an authentic record of Tu religion, lifestyles, and kinship structures. The project includes descriptions of family relations, household life, calendrical and life cycle rituals. It is carefully annotated and is an authoritative resource for students and scholars of traditional Asia. *Paul Nietupski, John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Timothy Thurston and Gerald Roche for their many helpful suggestions and Juha Janhunen for writing the Preface.

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## MUXIGU UGO

Ne pujiuri, ndani qinsangni lurijiri zui shdehada taiya aadee aaneehgini guseera kurija. Tensa muxiguni dii nigijida budahgi sunishidaji gua amahgiingi yiha. Ndahgini aadee mudeguni luannijinada ndahgide ganni aaba aamahgina amahgiingi yiiguni budahgidi bu jilaji zangda kileji guigu tigiinga. Hgengiini muni aaba kilesanna jida ganda shduguhgini sgaji gua jang ne Nansan Badii pujiha. Nansan Badiini muni aaba tailaji hugughawa gina. Aadee da aaneeni budahgi hudu jilani.

Muni aaba xuutang udeda ruaji gua, Qidari ugo gulesada haran kidi nesilaja. Nigeħa kunni zhunzhuu, darang sgilini saini. Huina qinsangni ne fulunra għaraghawa, sghan rmaangi hguaji għuji gui, kudu nanhan, mulasla luan tinga sghan adalgida la shdaji gua. Huinog ne ganni bulaihgini pujiu muxi ghara, yiiguadi gunzu yiigu dii yiisge xjiribu adalgi laja. Aaba gan mulasladina ne diidangma Mongħul amahgiingi yiiguni bulaihgħidina kijeedinida guleji għuangi nda ne pujiuni jiurigura hudu yangla shdaja. Aaba jiu tigiinga qi ganla kijeeda handilasa tangxanima jiu kijeedinida ayilidi amakija, ndani qinsangdi nensa muxi amakija tigiina. Ne yiiguala ne huina bu Limusishiden ne Mongħulni jiurigura yangla shdaxja. Hgħali ginii muni jinqangii aaba buda mulaslahgidini ganni Mongħulni għulej boxi shdagura.

Għoori mengħan fanni huinasa Mongħulni yiiguala bu jilagħnsala biilasa yiiguala buraji xna: deelna musilidijin qundina, kunħgi kuduna banka yang nige ghajarishdi xna, yerishdi lalang kun yiiguala ghada ghari xna. Mulahgi ghada dagħunla yiiguala tannilida guura szaribatinla jihunlana. Tinga Mongħul ugoni għulejin dii

nige ghoori guseeni kunha shbinzi quundiguna. Haran fansa muxi muulasa Mongghulni yiiguala buragunagisa sgilisa chukiji yiidighana. Niumalang muulasa dii jiu tigii logga, kenmada dangla adaguna ne Mongghulni buragura. Tinga do jiu muulaguni shdasa maliihan mudejin, lailasanhgini nigiji hura boxiya ginii! Buda jiu tigangi shdaguna.

Ne pujiuni ndani qinsangni Yinyiila jiuriji ne Mongghuldi duralajinhgidi jangjiungi kuji gharigha shdasachuanggiji muulanii! Amagagisa bu Mongghulwa darang Tughuan kunna.

## PREFACE

### THE TU PEOPLE AND CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN WORLD

This book is about the Tu people, one of China's officially recognized nationalities. Also known as the Monguor (Monghul, Monghuor, Mangghuer), the Tu have played an important role in the history of the Sino-Tibetan borderland, a region currently administered in the context of China's Gansu and Qinghai provinces where cultures and languages have long mixed. The Tu people are also mixed: they are Mongols by language, Tibetans by religion, and Chinese in many aspects pertaining to material and social culture. Historically, they have absorbed traces of certain more ancient local peoples and cultures, including the mediaeval Tuyuhun.

Through his own biography, and through those of his ancestors and family members, Limusishiden describes great changes currently occurring in the immediate environment of the Tu people. For a variety of political, demographic, economic, and cultural reasons, the Chinese presence is increasingly strong, which is why the ethnic and local traditions of the Tu have become endangered. Tu native areas have experienced both the positive and the negative effects of the state-sponsored Western Regions Development Program. The provincial capital Xining, just a short car ride away, is today a flourishing multiethnic metropolis whose influence is felt throughout the Tu villages.

Perhaps most ominously, the Tu language is disappearing, as its speakers abandon it in favor of Chinese.

The language could possibly be saved if a consistent policy of bilingual education and ethnic rights were applied. However, it is difficult to blame the Chinese government for what is happening—the Tu are just another example of the global wave of linguistic and cultural streamlining that humankind is undergoing. Probably the only way to rationally meet this challenge is to increase the impact of education among all local ethnic groups. Educated individuals can rise above the masses and see what is relevant for their own ethnic group, if anything is to be done to salvage the shrinking pool of linguistic identities, ethnic heritage, and local knowledge.

In this respect, the author of this book, Limusishiden (*alias* Dr. Li), is an exemplary representative of his people. Against all odds, from an environment debilitated by rural poverty and the political insanity of the Cultural Revolution, he has built a successful career in the medical profession, regaining the social status that his people had lost. Moreover, although an integrated modern citizen of China, Dr. Li has not given up his native language and ethnicity. In fact, he is one of the very few who continues to transmit the Tu language as a living medium in his own family lineage in spite of the immense pressure of the dominant majority society.

Dr. Li would not be Dr. Li had he confined his impact to the medical profession. Since his college education, he has actively documented the material culture and social traditions of his ethnic group. His *Huzhu Mongghul Folklore* (Munich, 1998, together with Kevin Stuart) is the first international publication containing authentic samples of several genres of modern Tu folklore, as still cultivated today. As a promoter of his ethnic language, Dr. Li has made TV programs and published educational books with the aim of giving the language more social visibility in a situation where many Tu

speakers feel uncertain about their ethnic and linguistic future. Optimism, combined with realism and pragmatism, is a consistent feature of Dr. Li's approach.

As a Finn with a multicultural background, I must mention that many of the early cultivators of the Finnish language during the period of national awakening in the nineteenth century were also medical doctors. The most obvious Finnish counterpart to Dr. Li, who recently completed a year of specialist medical training in a Finnish hospital, is Elias Lönnrot (1802-1884), the medical doctor who collected materials for the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic.

Dr. Li has made wise choices in his life and this book describes the background from which these choices have sprung, demonstrating that difficulties can be overcome.

*Juha Janhunen*

*Professor and Chair, East Asian Languages and Cultures  
University of Helsinki, Finland*

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph One. Srangxji (unrelated to Limusishiden), prays in her courtyard (Jugui, Janba (Wangjia 汪家) Village, Danma Town, 1999).

Photograph Two. Srangxji fetches water in a wood bucket (Jugui, Janba Village, Danma Town, 1999).

Photograph Three. Zhunmaahua, Limusishiden's father's elder brother's wife (commerical photographer, Lhasa, 2007).

Photograph Four. Pei (*shao kang* 烧炕)<sup>1</sup> in 1992. Few homes had *pei* in 2009. (Limusishiden, Wughuang Village (Bahong 巴洪), Wushi 五十 Town, 1992).

Photograph Five. Zanghqua (Sangshige 桑士哥, Wushi Town seat) in 1992 when Mongghul used horses. Very few horses were found in Mongghul areas in 2009 (Limusishiden).

Photograph Six. Mongghul pilgrims from Shgeayili (Dazhuang 大庄) Village, Donggou Township at Labrang (Labuleng 拉卜楞, Bla brang) Monastery,

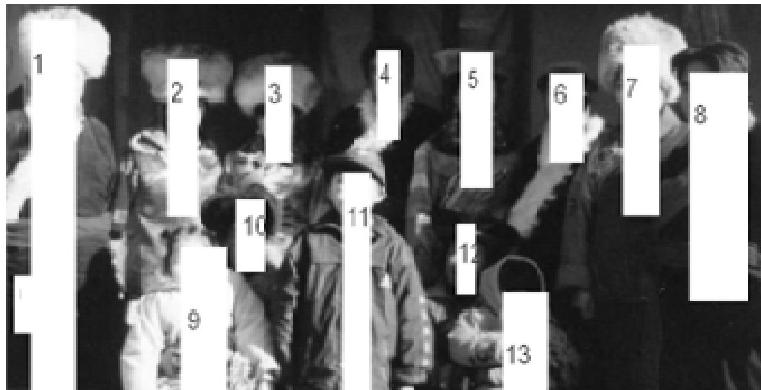
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<sup>1</sup> Traditionally, Mongghul used a *pei* in a room that was divided into two parts by a *langang* 'low wall'. One part of the room was for cooking. The other half was for the *pei*, a raised platform where all the family slept at night using fur-lined robes as quilts and entertained guests with food, liquor, and conversation. The *pei* was made of adobe bricks and heated in one of two ways: (1) Heat from the kitchen fire passed through the *pei* via channels to the chimney, and (2) a fire fueled by animal dung and straw burned in the center of the *pei*. People sat around the fire on the *pei* in winter and boiled tea over this smoky tear-inducing fire.

Xiahe 夏河 County, Gannan 甘南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province. Limusishiden and Ha Mingzong 哈明宗 were on a research trip to Shaowa 勺哇 Tu Autonomous Township, Joni (Zhuoni 卓尼) County, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and met these pilgrims enroute (Limusishiden, 2004).

Photograph Seven. A water mill that still stood in 2009, but was unused, as are the other three or so other water mills in Wushi Town (Limusishiden, Langja (Langjia 浪加) Village, Wushi Town, 1992).

Photograph Eight. Limusishiden's family. 1 = Limusishiden, 2 = Jugui, 3 = Zhinzan, 4 = Danjansirang, 5 = Jiuyahua, 6 = Limudanzhuu, 7 = Ren Xiuzhi, 8 = Niidosirang, 9 = Srangsuu, 10 = Limuzhunmaa, 11 = Lamuniruu, 12 = Saihua, 13 = Liminsuu (Fangshinbog, Tughuan Village, Danma Town, 2005).



Photograph Nine. Mongghul *anzhog* dance (Jugui, Pudang (Pudonggou 普洞沟) Village, Danma Town, 1997).

Photograph Ten. The head of the bride at this wedding is covered by red cloth. She is about to kowtow at the groom's home on the piece of felt in front of her (Jugui, Foorijang (Huoerjun 霍尔郡) Village, Wushi Town, 2001).

Photograph Eleven. Building a courtyard wall in summer  
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Photograph Twelve. Limusishiden's father's three sisters.  
(L-R) Sishijinsuu, Jiuyansuu, Jiraqong  
(Limudanzhuu, Tughuan Village, Danma Town,  
2003).

Photograph Thirteen. Limujansan (1938-1994),  
Limusishiden's father's elder brother (commercial  
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Photograph Fourteen. Women wore Mongghul clothing in  
1991 in Jughuari (Zhuoke 卓科) Village, Wushi  
Town. This was no longer the case in 2009  
(Limusishiden, 1991).

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front of Shgeayili Village Primary School, Donggou  
Township reading: Dazhuang xiaoxue 大庄小学  
and Shgeayili Mula Surghual (Dazhuang Primary  
School) (Limusishiden, Shgeayili Village, Donggou  
Township, 2002).

Photograph Sixteen. Two elderly Mongghul women  
(Limusishiden, Zangxi Village, Wushi Town,  
1999).

Photograph Seventeen. Limusishiden's mother's mother,  
Qishihua (1923-2003) holds Liminsuu (1999)  
(Limusishiden, Qishihua's home, Yomajaa Village,  
Donggou Township, 1999).

Photograph Eighteen. Limusishiden's father's father's  
youngest brother (~1928-1998), a monk, with two  
of Limusishiden's cousins: Caibog (left) and  
Durijinbin (right) (Mantuu Lamasery, Danma  
Town).

Photograph Nineteen. Tirijijinbu (Thu'u ru gcen po) deity  
in Tughuan Village, Wushi Town attracts many  
Amdo pilgrims (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty. Rgulang Monastery (Youningsi 佑寧寺; Dgon lung dgon pa) (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty-one. Traditional Mongghul front gate in Tughuan Village. Such entrances were rare in 2009 (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty-two. The Tughuan Village entrance features a *binkang* (pavilion) and a *suurishidi* (stone-soil structure), which are thought to prevent hailstones and disease, and two sacred trees, which are thought to suppress evil and protect the village from disease (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty-three. Limusishiden's home village, Tughuan (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty-four. Wughuangmiele (Wu hong mi la<sup>2</sup>) deity in Xewarishidi Village, Songduo Township attracts pilgrims from Amdo (Limusishiden, 2009).

Photograph Twenty-five. Limusishiden's father's mother, Srangxji (1923-1987) in Danma Town (commercial photographer, between the eleventh and sixteenth days of the sixth lunar month, 1982).

Photograph Twenty-six. Qiyansuu (left), Rnqanhua (center), and Sangjixji (right) are Limusishiden's sisters. Rnqanhua married a Mongghul man who does not speak Mongghul and moved into his home in Qilian 祁連 County, Haibei 海北 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. His family moved there from today's Langja Village, Wushi Town, Huzhu County. Sangjixji lives with her husband in Durishidii (Duoshidai 多士代) Village, Taizi Township (commercial photographer, Danma Town government seat, between the eleventh and sixteenth days of the sixth lunar month, 1997).

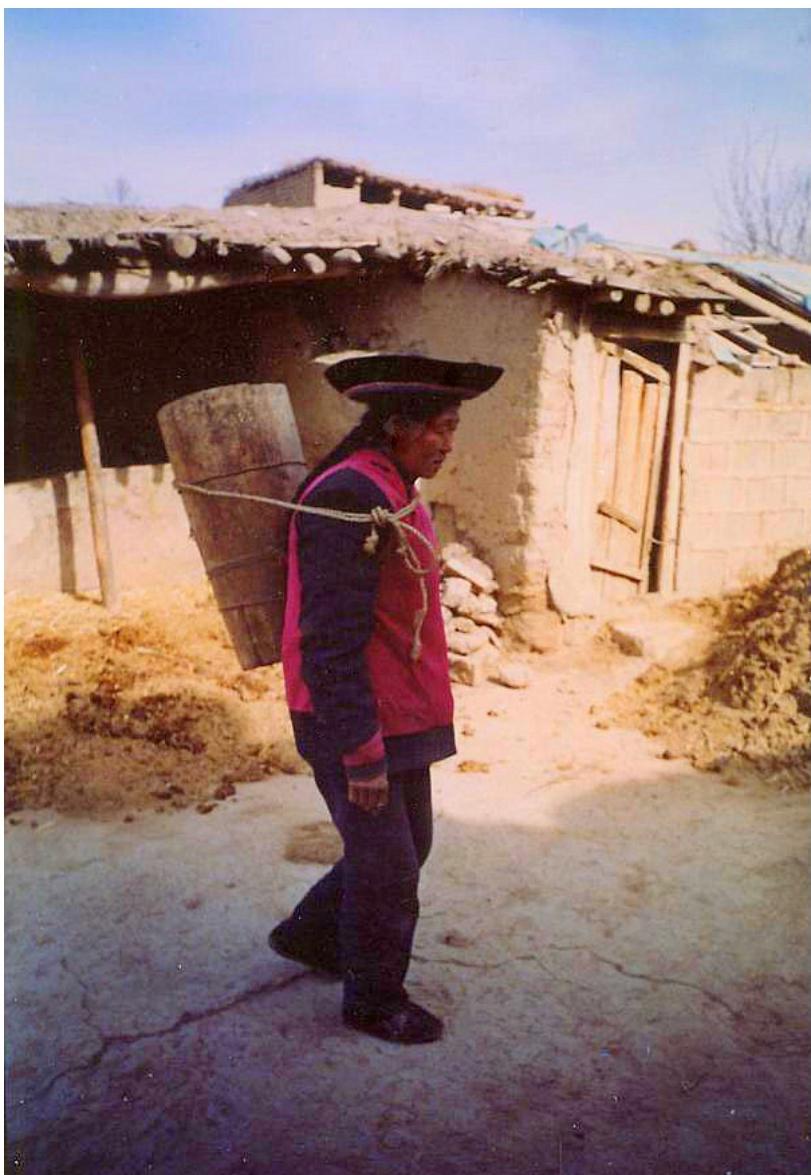
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<sup>2</sup> Chinese characters unknown.

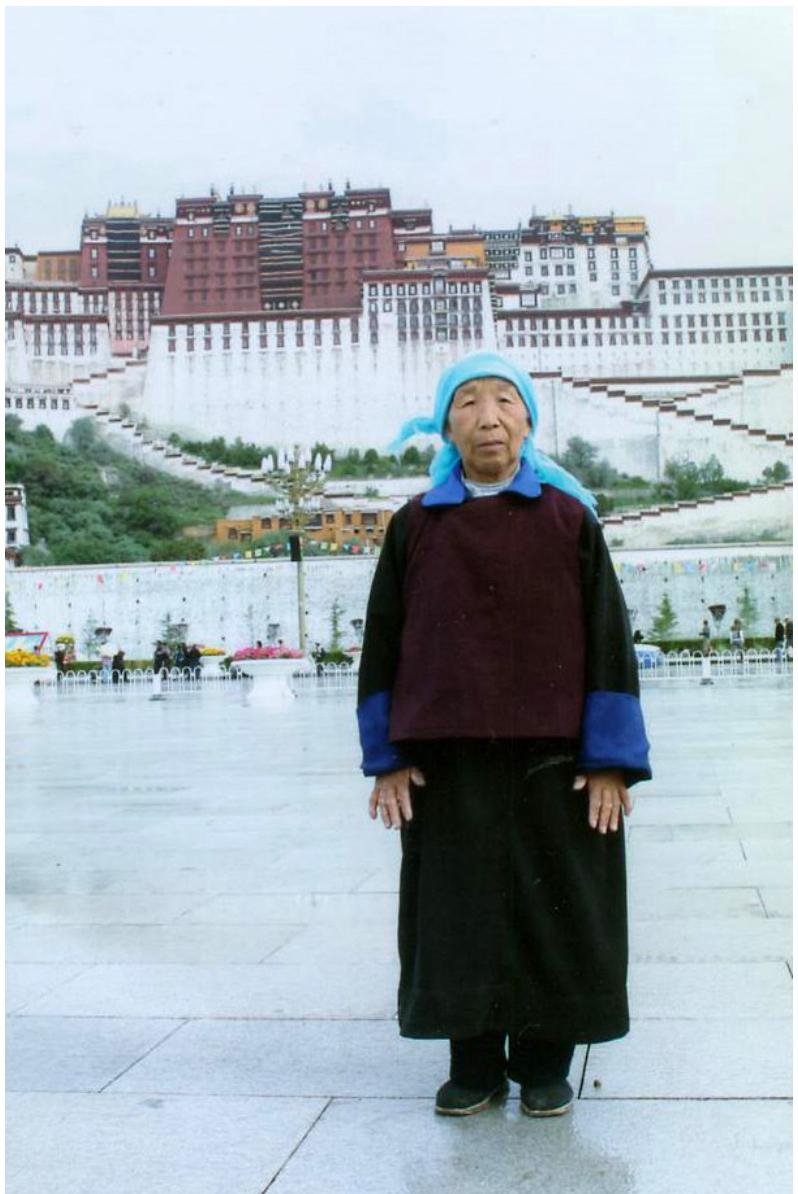
Photograph Twenty-seven. Mongghul numbers (left = eighty-three; right = thirty-four) marked by Limusishiden's father, Limuzhunmaa, on a wall of the family home in Tughuan Village.



Photograph One.



Photograph Two.



Photograph Three.



Photograph Four.

Photograph Five.  
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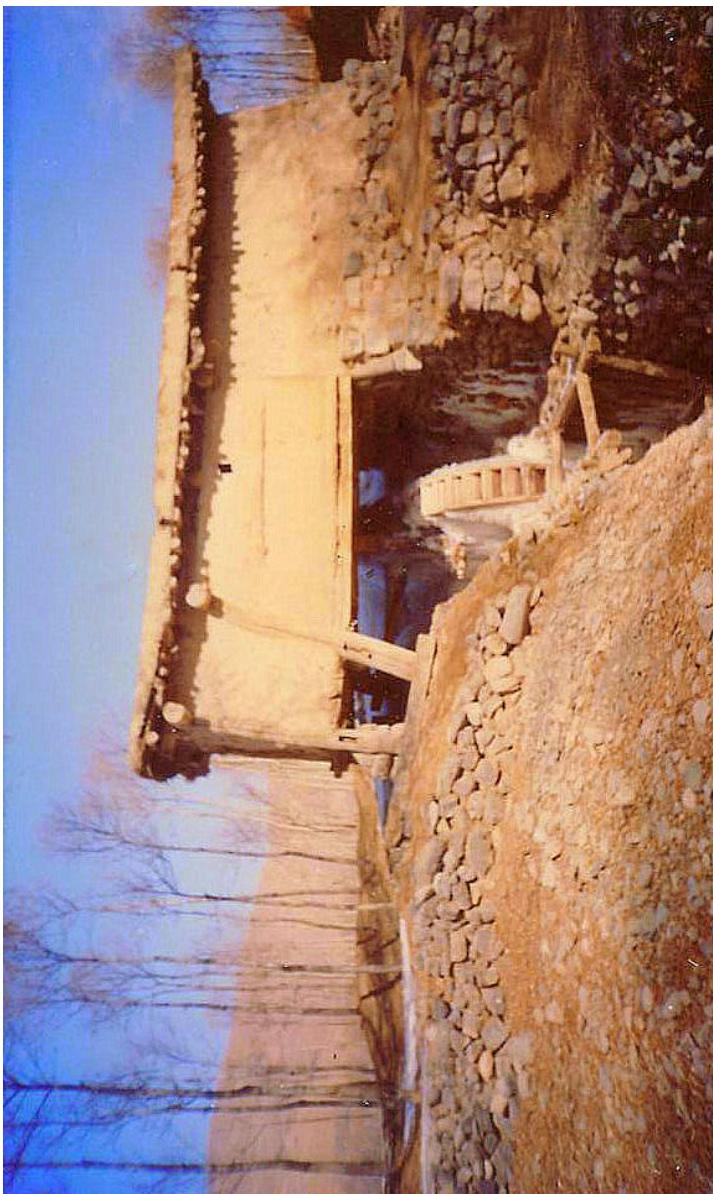


Photograph Six.

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Photograph Seven.  
•23•



Photograph Eight.

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Photograph Nine.

•26•

Photograph Ten.

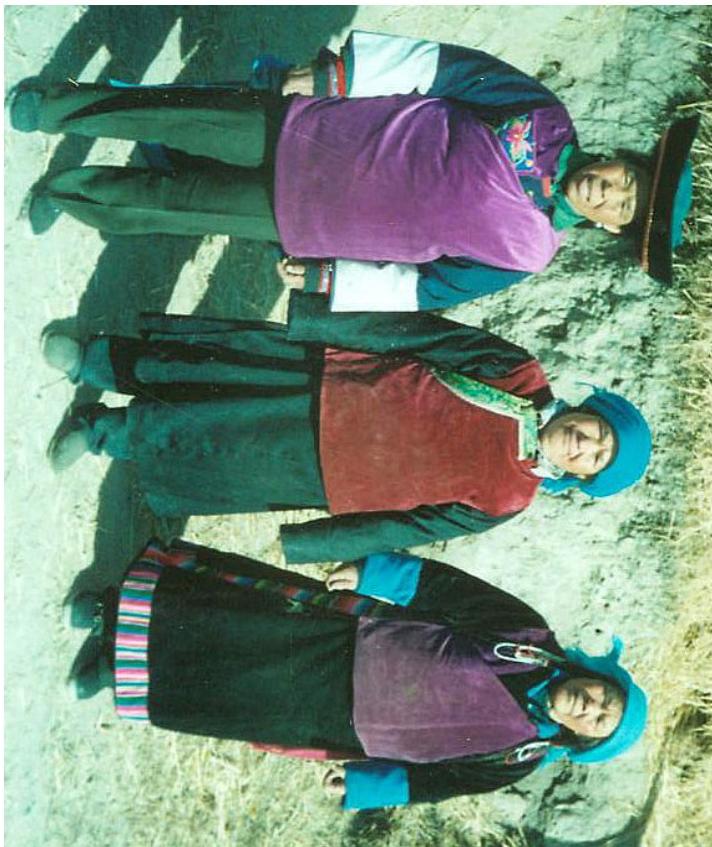




Photograph Eleven.

Photograph Twelve.

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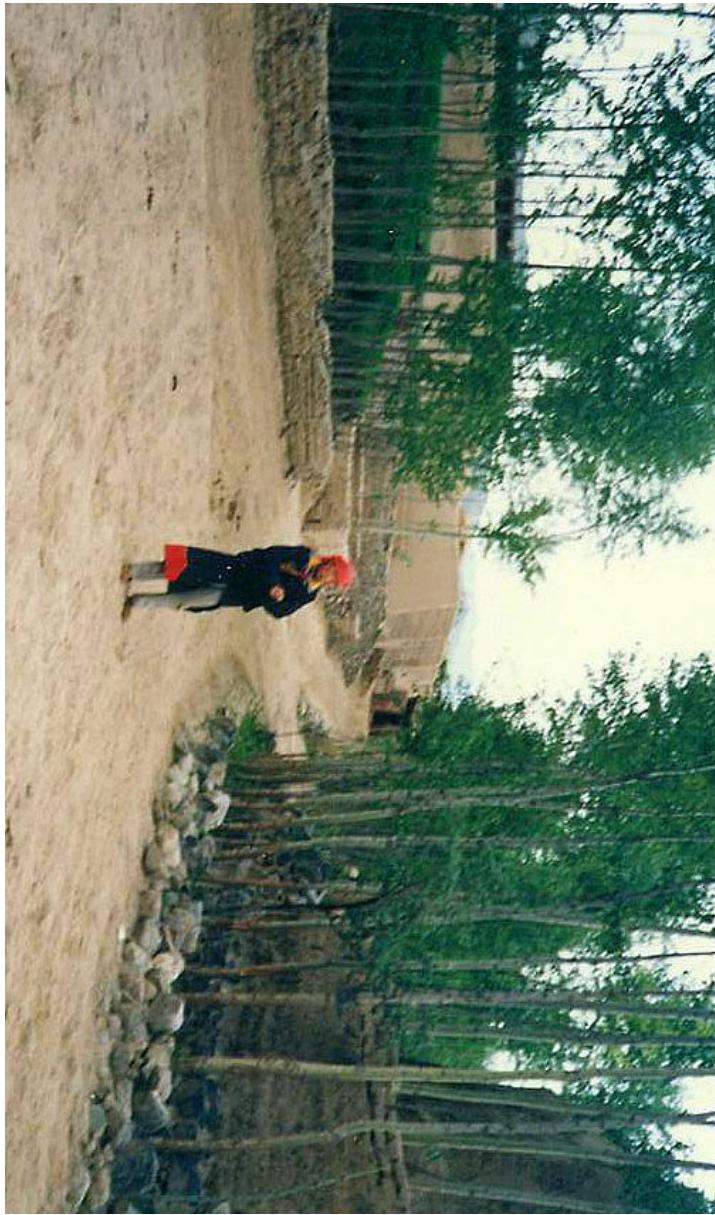


Photograph Thirteen.  
•29•



Photograph Fourteen.

•30•





Photograph Fifteen.



Photograph Sixteen.



Photograph Seventeen.



Photograph Eighteen.

Photograph Nineteen.  
•35•





Photograph Twenty.



Photograph Twenty-one.



Photograph Twenty-two.



Photograph Twenty-three.



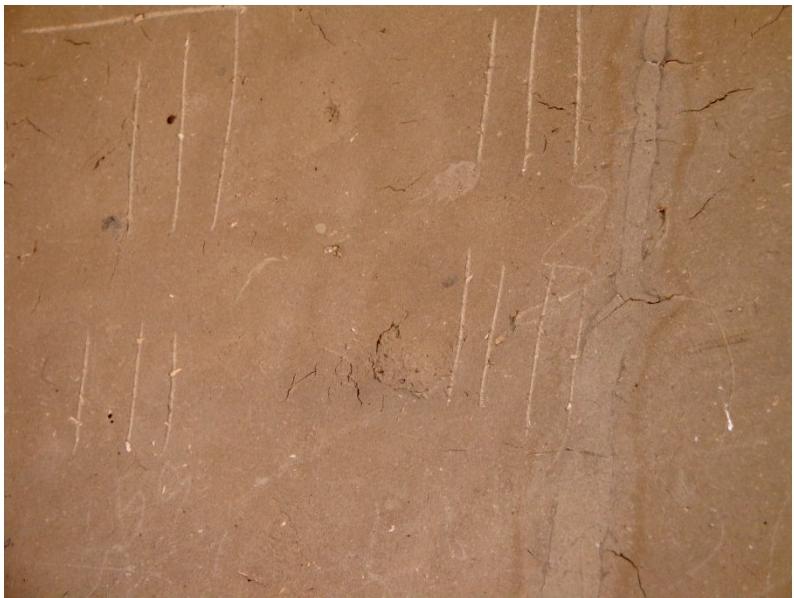
Photograph Twenty-four.



Photograph Twenty-five.



Photograph Twenty-six.



Photograph Twenty-seven

## CHAPTER ONE

### PEOPLE

Name	Kinship Term	Term of Address	Born	Died	Relationship to Limusishiden
Danjansirang (Li Deming 李得明)	diu	diu	1977		youngest brother
Fangshinbog (Shuang Shenbao 双神保)	aagуга	aагуга	1966		father's elder brother's eldest son
Jiraqog	aagu	aagu	1940		father's elder sister
Jiuyansuu	aagu	aagu	1945		father's younger sister
Jugui (Lu Wanfang 鲁万芳)	yiri	yiri	1969		wife
Lamuduriji	guiya	zhuashidi <sup>3</sup> guiya	1942	1995	father's elder sister's husband

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<sup>3</sup> Zhuashidi refers to today's Zhuashidi (Zhuashitu 抓什图, Baizhade 白扎德, Zhade 扎德, Baizhuazi 白抓子) Village, Danma 丹麻 Town.

Name	Kinship Term	Term of Address	Born	Died	Relationship to Limusishiden
Limudanzhuu (Li Deqing 李得庆)	aagугуа	аагугуа	1966		elder brother
Limuduriji	гига ааба	гига ааба	1952		father's younger brother
Limujansan	шгэ ааба	шгэ ааба	1938	1994	father's elder brother
Jiuyahua (Qi Haiyan 祁海燕)	хнэжий	хнэжий	1968		older brother's wife
Lamuniruu	куу	Ламунируу	1993		older brother's son
Limudiinjiri	шгэ ааде	шгэ ааде	1912	1992	father's father's eldest brother
Limusirang	ааде	ааде	1924	1987	father's father
Limuzhunmaa	ааба	ааба	1942		father
Lirija	аажуа ааде	аажуа ааде	1924	1986	father's mother's younger brother
Minkari	szanghuali <sup>4</sup> aanee	szanghuali aanee	1926	1989	father's mother's younger sister

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<sup>4</sup> She was born in and married a man from Szanghuali (Nianxian 念先) Village, where she lived all her life, hence the name.

Name	Kinship Term	Term of Address	Born	Died	Relationship to Limusishiden
Niidosirang (Li Deyuan 李得元)	diu	diu	1974		younger brother
Niiga	aayi	aayi	1950		mother's younger sister
Puriji	aayi	aayi	1942		mother's elder sister
Qilunbog	aajiu	aajiu	1958		mother's brother
Qishihua	aanee	yomajaa <sup>5</sup> aanee	1923	2003	mother's mother
Qiyansuu Ren Xiuzhi 任秀智	xjun diu diu yiri	xjun diu Ren Xiuzhi	1971		younger sister younger brother's wife
Rnqan	aadee	yomajaa aadee	1918	1984	mother's father
Rnqaxji	aanee	aanee	unclear	1961	father's mother's mother
Saihua	aama	aama	1945		mother
Sishijinsuu	aagu	aagu	1954		father's youngest sister
Srangsuu (Li Sirang 李思 让)	xjun	Srangsuu	1999		younger brother's daughter
Srangxji	aanee	aanee	1923	1987	father's mother
Zangdii	guiya aadee	guiya aadee	1919	2007	father's father's sister's husband

<sup>5</sup> Yomajaa = Yomajaa (Yaoma 姚麻) Village, Donggou  
东沟 Township, where she was born.

Name	Kinship Term	Term of Address	Born	Died	Relationship to
Zhinzan	diu yiri	Zhinzan	1981		Limusishiden youngest brother's wife
Zhunmaahua	shge aama	shge aama	1940		father's elder brother's wife
Zhunmaasuu	aagu	Zhunmaasuu aagu	1968		father's elder sister's daughter
Liminsuu (Li Mengsuo 李 梦索)	xjun	Liminsuu	1999		daughter
Caibog (Caibao 财宝)	diu	Caibog	1971		father's elder brother's second son
Durijinbin	aagugua	aagugua	1966		father's father's eldest's brother's grandson
Rnqanhua	aagu	aagu	1970		father's cousin's daughter
Sangjixji	xjundi	Sangjixji	1972		father's cousin's daughter

## CHAPTER TWO

### BACKGROUND<sup>6</sup>

It was about 1971. An elderly blind man wearing a long Mongghul robe and a black lambskin hat pounded the ground with his walking stick as he walked toward my home. I watched him from the roof of our house. I told Grandfather (Limusirang, 1924-1987) and he quickly barred the front gate. A few moments later a strong 'bang-bang' sounded at the gate. My family members listened quietly and motionlessly until the sound of the tapping walking stick faded away about twenty minutes later. I watched from the roof as the old man departed.

I asked Mother (Saihua, b. 1945), why Grandfather would not let him enter. From her melancholy reply, I learned that this man, who had been Grandfather's friend for years and who had often visited, had done something unspeakable—a month before, he had gone to a Han 汉 Chinese home and had eaten donkey meat. Grandfather had heard this and thought it was absolutely disgraceful. Why would a Mongghul eat donkey meat? He could not accept this and ended their relationship.

My large, extended family consisted of three families. The rooms on the west side of our home compound were for my elder uncle, Limujansan (1938-1994), and his immediate family; the rooms on the

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<sup>6</sup> The complex cultural and linguistic background of those classified as Tu has been explored in recent publications. See, for example, the new introductions in the 2006 republication of Schram (1954-1961).

northeast were for my grandparents, younger uncle (Limuduriji, b. 1952), and aunts; and the three south rooms were for Father (Limuzhunmaa, b. 1942), Mother, me, and my siblings.

Each family had its own cooking pot. Rules dictated by my grandparents meant that certain family affairs were done cooperatively, e.g., filling the pigsty with dry soil, carrying manure outside the courtyard, and fieldwork. Grandfather chose someone from our large household to represent us at community events like weddings, helping relatives build new courtyard-enclosing walls, and so on.

Children in the extended family came and went freely and were often in the younger uncle's home because our grandparents lived there.

The births of my elder brother (Limudanzhuu; b. 1966), and cousin (Fangshinbog; b. 1966), brought great happiness, strength, and courage in the struggle for the necessities of life to the extended family. These two 'treasure' grandsons slept with Grandmother (Srangxji, 1923-1987), who breastfed them until they were twelve.

My grandparents doted on all their grandchildren, which created a core harmony, despite numerous conflicts between grandparents, their sons, daughters-in-law, paternal aunts, and grandchildren. For example, when Grandmother's daughters came to visit, she allowed them to stay longer than she allowed her daughters-in-law to stay at their parents' homes. Grandmother secretly bought cloth for her unmarried daughters in the twelfth month so that they could make new clothes for themselves for the coming New Year. She did not buy such cloth for her daughters-in-law, who resented such unfair treatment. Other conflicts arose from, for example, one daughter-in-law regularly arising early, fetching water from the spring, cooking breakfast, and working hard in the home and fields and being unhappy with the other

daughters-in-law who got up later, did less work, and who often visited their parents' homes, leaving extra work to her.

## CHAPTER THREE

### PATERNAL AUNTS

#### Jiraqog

Jiraqog (b. 1940), Grandmother's first daughter, married three times. She moved to her first husband's home in Szanghuali Village, Donggou Township where Grandmother's parents' home was located. Jiraqog opposed the marriage from the start because her husband had divorced his first wife and had a five-year-old child. She knew marrying a previously married man would spoil her reputation.<sup>7</sup> Finally, however, my grandparents forced her to marry the man because he was Grandmother's relative.

Several months after the marriage, Jiraqog daringly

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<sup>7</sup> Until about 1980, men and women less than forty years old were expected to seek a new spouse once they divorced, or if their spouse died. A woman who had never married was considered deviant if she married into the home of a man who had once been married. There would then be gossip that her family had bad fortune, could not find a matchmaker for her, and so on. If she entered into such a marriage, she was viewed as a *huida yiri* 'second time married woman'. Negative stories about the new wife were particularly told in her husband's village and she was, for example, never chosen to escort a bride by pulling a piece of white felt in front of the bride, leading her into her new husband's household. The fact that she was considered to have been married twice was an ill portent for the new bride.

told her parents that she would kill herself if they insisted she stay married. Ultimately, my grandparents had no choice but to agree and she then left her husband.

One and a half years later, she married a man in Xangshida (Shangshida 尚示大) Village, Danma Town. One year later, on the afternoon of her mother-in-law's funeral, she knelt before the coffin wearing her mourning clothes. Suddenly she heard singing and knew that people were dancing *anzhog*.<sup>8</sup> She desperately wanted to

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<sup>8</sup> *Anzhog* (*anzhao* 安召) is used by local people to refer to a circle dance widely performed in Mongghul areas. If it is held in a household, it is done surrounding the small flower garden in the center of the courtyard or in front of the household gate if a wedding is being held. It is also performed in lanes or on threshing grounds in winter during the New Year period. Typically, one or two male singers lead the singing and dancing while others (mostly women) follow. The dancers first bend forward while swinging their arms left and right twice, then turn their bodies with their arms stretched into the air. Several songs may accompany the dance.

In an effort to create more tourist interest in the Tu, imaginative statements about *anzhog* have been written such as (Wa and Mo 2001):

The Anzhao Dance is the oldest and most representative dance of the Tu people, reflecting the nomadic way of life, and wars and struggles of their ancestors. A performance of this dance presents a vivid image of the ancient Tu people, as they danced around a yurt or a bonfire in celebration of a battle victory, a harvest, or a wedding. The dance may be either slow or fast, relaxed or animated, and the accompanying songs express the Tu people's philosophy on life, and their sincere welcome to

participate in the dancing. At this time, most mourning participants had left her home. Only a few mourners still knelt before the coffin. She was deeply attracted by the beautiful dancing songs. Finally, she stealthily went out to the lane and joined in the circle dance. Her husband soon learned this and was enraged. It was inconceivable that his wife had danced on the day of her mother-in-law's funeral! It was so disgraceful that he forced her to leave with her young daughter, Zhunmaasuu (b. 1968).

Two years later she married into a Tibetan home in Zhuashidi Village, Danma Town, where Tibetan, Mongghul, and Han live together. Jiraqog's Tibetan husband, Lamuduriji (1942-1995), spoke fluent Tibetan. However, his family members now speak the local Chinese dialect, except when using certain Tibetan kinship terms to address each other. Jiraqog speaks to her children only in Mongghul at home while her husband spoke to them in the local Chinese dialect. Consequently, all the children understand Mongghul but speak only in local Chinese dialect in and outside the home. They do not speak Tibetan.

Jiraqog gave birth to four children after marrying her Tibetan husband. Her husband had two children from a previous marriage meaning seven children lived in the home—six daughters and one son.

In 2009, Jiraqog lived with her son and cared for her two grandsons, who understood Mongghul because Jiraqog only spoke to them in Mongghul.

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their guests.

The name and style of *anzhog* are similar to *azhe* (no written Tibetan form) performed by local, Amdo (Anduo 安多; A mdo) Tibetans.

## Jiuyansuu

Jiuyansuu (b. 1945) became deaf in childhood from an illness that caused pus to flow from her ears. She married a man from Jughuari Village, Wushi Town and moved into his home. Once her father-in-law told her husband, "Your wife is deaf and does not match you well. Divorce her and I will find another wife for you." Her husband refused because he cared for her deeply, she had already given birth to a son, and many elders said she was one of the hardest workers in the village.

By 2008, Jiuyansuu had six children—four daughters and two sons. Two of the daughters lived with their Han Chinese husbands in Shanxi 山西 Province, whom they met when the men were doing carpentry work in their village. One daughter married and lived with a man in his home in Pudang Village, Danma Town. In 2008, they decided to move to Haixi 海西 Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province in search of a better life.<sup>9</sup> The remaining daughter graduated from

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<sup>9</sup> A number of families from Fulaan Nara (Red Sun) including Niuqi (Liushuigou 流水沟), Jiuti (Jiaotou 教头), Xangri (Shenlu 神路), Taraalidighuali (Changgou 长沟), Snsari (Xin Ang 新昂), Dolidighuali (Dazigou 达子沟), and Alighuan (Bagushan 八古山) villages moved and settled in Keke 柯柯 Town, Wulan 乌兰 County, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the 1980s as part of World Food Programme Project 3557 that resettled 1,600 households from Huzhu, and Huangyuan 湟源 counties (Wolfensohn ND). Many also settled in Xinjiang 新疆 Uygur (Weiwer 维吾尔) Autonomous Region. Poverty motivated such migration. Keke Town is arid and agriculture is difficult. The situation is exacerbated

Huangyuan Animal Husbandry College, Huangyuan County in 2006. After graduation she searched for a job related to her college study but as of 2009, had not found one. She was a saleswoman in a pharmacy shop in Xining 西宁 City.

The younger son was unmarried because, in 2009, the family was so poor that prospective brides did not wish to marry and live in the home.

### Sishijinsuu

Sishijinsuu (b. 1954) first married a man from Shdangja (Dongjia 东家) Village, Danma Town. Her mother-in-law gave her little in the way of food and clothes, forced her to work hard in the fields, and beat her. Her husband was afraid of his mother and refused to intervene. Sishijinsuu divorced him and later married a man who lived in Shgeayili Village, Donggou Township.

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by high summer heat and sandstorms. The Fulaan Nara Mongghul lived in Middle Village and Saina 赛娜 Village where most villagers were Mongghul. Others were Han from Huzhu County. Their houses were similar to Huzhu houses. Most households raised a few head of cattle. The main source of income was from working for the Keke Salt Company and for the local train station.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER (SRANGXJI)

Srangxji's home was in remote, impoverished Szanghuali Village, Donggou Township. All villagers are Mongghul and all speak Mongghul. In 2008, there were 200 households (~1,000 people) of whom about thirty percent spoke a smattering of Qinghai Chinese Dialect.

Grandmother's father (name unknown, d. ~1958), mother (Rnqaxji, d. ~1961), and younger brother (Lirija, 1924-1986) were accomplished singers. There were eight people in her home including her parents, three brothers, and two sisters. Grandmother was the oldest child. Her younger sister, Minkari (1926-1989), married and lived in her husband's home in the same village and was also a locally famous singer.

Grandmother learned songs from her parents and elderly women in her village before she married Grandfather. She loved weddings and festivals at which she joyously sang and danced. A skillful organizer, she was at her happiest when she was about to attend a wedding or festival. Mother told me that Grandmother was like a mad woman when villagers gathered on merrymaking occasions. Her energy often made a wedding very successful. Her organization made the occasion vibrant and interesting. She strictly enforced the traditional wedding process, particularly for wedding songs. She felt it was shameful and she felt guilty if any songs were not sung or were not sung completely. At weddings, she stayed from beginning to end, and then was scolded by Grandfather on the grounds that she did not do housework. Every wedding

held in Tughuan Village was attended by all the village women once they heard Grandmother was there. Her presence ensured the host's courtyard was full of merrymaking.

When the matchmakers and bride-taker (*naaxjin*) arrived in the girl's home, Grandmother quickly organized women to stand outside the window of the guest room and face inside where matchmakers and bride-takers were being entertained with food and liquor. Once it was time<sup>10</sup> to ritually abuse the bride-taker, Grandmother began singing relevant songs. Later at the appropriate time,<sup>11</sup> Grandmother rushed into the guest room first and pulled on the bride-taker's robe, signaling he should go outside to lead villagers in *anzhog*.

Her eloquence and humor ensured the success of a wedding. If there were no men to lead the *anzhog* dance in a village gathering or if there were, but they were reluctant to perform, Grandmother began to sing and dance, acting out the lead man's role. Other women quickly joined her.

When guests visited Grandmother's home, she offered liquor, urged them to sing drinking songs, sat with them on the *pei*, and sang with them. She was delighted when guests visited, particularly when the guests sang. Grandmother drank with the guests, however, Limusishiden never saw her drunk.

Grandfather's adoptive mother was Grandmother's father's sister who had married into Grandfather's adoptive

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<sup>10</sup> As matchmakers and bride-takers are served a second course of meat and radish or potato stuffed steamed buns women begin singing. Three courses are served: tea and bread, stuffed steamed buns, and noodles.

<sup>11</sup> After about a half hour of singing, women rush into the guest room and pull the bride-takers to go outside to lead villagers in *anzhog*.

father's home. Grandmother married Grandfather in line with the *aagu digha* (aunt follow) custom.<sup>13</sup> It was believed that an aunt was kinder to her niece when the niece married her aunt's son than when the bride was not a relative. This arrangement also strengthened the relationship between the two sides and reduced the bridewealth.

Generally, a cousin relationship between the two sides was only maintained for two generations. The two sides did not actively visit each other's home if new marriages did not refresh the relationship.

There were only four households (about twenty residents) in Tughuan Village when Grandmother married Grandfather and moved into his home at the age of fourteen in 1937. Women wore distinctive *niudaari* 'headdresses'.<sup>14</sup> The whole area was sparsely settled. Informants said Tughuan Village was the first village in Danma Valley and that the original inhabitants had left Fulaan Nara Tughuan

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<sup>13</sup> This refers to a boy marrying his mother's brother's daughter and a girl marrying her father's sister's son. Such marriages were common before 1980.

<sup>14</sup> In 1938, according to an unpublished government document, the ruling Ma 马 Family Government forced Mongghul women to stop wearing distinctive Mongghul clothing. Afterwards, *niudaari* gradually disappeared. The four types of *niudaari* were Tughuan *niudaari*, *boqi* (*boji* 簸箕 winnowing tray) *niudaari*, *njası* (plough) *niudaari*, and *shge* (big) *niudaari*. The Tughuan *niudaari* was worn only by the women of the region under the jurisdiction of Tughuan Living Buddha. The *niudaari* was made of paper and easily damaged by rain, which is why local Han passersby urged each other to hurry when they saw Mongghul women rushing back to their homes from the fields—a sign of imminent rain.

Village and settled there to herd livestock. The wild nature of the terrain was such that wolves were often seen in the village outskirts. Women dared not fetch water from a spring one and a half kilometers away from the village unless their husbands took spears and accompanied them to guard against wolf attack. Village women worked together in the fields with men protecting them from wolves. It was very difficult for Grandmother to visit her parents at that time out of fear of wolf attack. This partly explains why local folksongs reflect women sadly missing their parents.

Grandmother was the last village woman who could sing Qiizi Dog 'Noodle Song'<sup>15</sup> in Tughuan and Pudang villages<sup>16</sup> when she was in her sixties. When girls married and were about to leave the village, women came to Grandmother's home and invited her to join the banquet and sing this song at the appropriate time. She willingly accepted. When Grandmother died in 1987, this unique

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<sup>15</sup> A wedding song sung when the banquet and related activities neared an end. The bride-taker was invited to a clan member's home and offered tea and *qiizi* 'small, triangular noodles'. When the noodles were ready, two women brought a basin of *qiizi*, stirred and slightly tossed the noodles into the air above the basin with a rolling pin, and began singing the *qiizi* song. The song praised the bride-taker in coming to take the bride and concluding the marriage. They asked the bride-taker many questions in song and the bride-taker responded in song. Afterwards, the women took the basin back to the kitchen, ending the *qiizi* song performance. Next, the bride-taker, matchmakers, and other participants ate noodles and joyfully made merriment. For more detail see Limusishiden and Stuart (1998:68-71).

<sup>16</sup> At that time, Tughuan and Pudang villagers performed all weddings, funerals, and other community events together.

wedding practice ended in Tughuan and Pudang villages.

Grandmother hoped that her descendants would learn her vast store of folksongs. When I and two cousins slept with Grandmother on the *bankang* 板炕<sup>17</sup> one night, she incessantly talked about Mongghul she had known, how nice *niudaari* were, folktales her parents had told, when and where she had attended weddings, and so on. Later, she said, "Now, Grandmother is going to teach you a Mongghul song. Listen!"

Ghadani szarishdini xaaxi rusinii,  
Xaaxini durasa buloggi gharinii,  
Bulogni rusiji muruungi zhiganii,  
Muruunni rusiji daliingi zhiganii.

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<sup>17</sup> An adobe platform located in a room used for sleeping and entertaining guests. It was divided into two parts—the *yikang* and the *bankang*. A large opening was made at the *bankang* center to facilitate placing fuel (straw and animal dung) inside. Five to six wood planks covered the opening once fuel was placed inside and were removed when more fuel was needed (two days later) and to remove ash. In contrast, the *yikang* was built of adobe bricks and heated via an oven outside the room. A cavity was made under the *yikang*, so it could be heated with smoldering fuel from the oven. The ensuing smoke was channeled outside. The father and sons of the family slept on the felt-covered *yikang*, while the wife, daughters, and babies slept on the *bankang* without a bed cushion, which allowed babies' urine and excrement to easily be scraped into the *bankang*. Sleeping on a *bankang* was uncomfortable, because there was no cushion beneath the naked body and the *bankang* emitted smoke. Occasionally, babies fell between the unstable planks and were seriously burned.

Sand flows at the mountain foot,  
A spring rises from under the sand,  
A river forms from the flowing spring,  
An ocean forms from the flowing river.<sup>18</sup>

Grandmother was popular because of her vivaciousness and social skills, and for her knowledge of traditional Mongghul medicine that she had learned from her parents and mother-in-law. Patients often visited her for treatment that was cheap and, at times, effective. Her treatments included, for example, in the case of *xriga naa* 'hepatitis', a patient adjusting their sash so it was around the abdomen at the top of their liver covering the painful area. She rubbed the patient's lower back, gradually working her hands to the front of the patient, rubbed over the liver area, and then moved her hands up to the chest. While doing this, she said, "*Xriga ruguwu? Ruguwa!* Liver repositioning? Repositioned!" The area was massaged in the morning, at noon, and again at night. During the rubbing, the patient was told to stretch out their big toes and thumbs and to raise and lower their head repeatedly.

Grandmother gave birth to twelve children. Half died before the age of five. Three of the survivors were sons. The oldest, Limujansan, studied for two years at a Chinese primary school, became a carpenter, and died in his fifties from a cerebral hemorrhage induced by hypertension. The second, Limuzhunmaa (short form: Zhunmaa), is an illiterate farmer. The third, Limuduriji, is a primary school teacher at Songde 松德 Primary School and has written a few articles in Chinese about Mongghul culture.

Grandmother died in 1987, probably from a cerebral hemorrhage.

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<sup>18</sup> See Limusishiden and Stuart (1998:116).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PATERNAL GRANDFATHER (LIMUSIRANG)

Limusirang had four brothers. Two became monks in Mantuu (Mantou 曼头)<sup>19</sup> Monastery under the Seventh Tughuan Living Buddha (1898-1959, Gasangdanquenima 噶桑丹却尼玛/ Thu'u kwan skal bzang dam).<sup>20</sup> The elder one was a knowledgeable monk. On the nineteenth day of the eighth lunar month of 1958, in line with the policy of abolishing superstition (*pochumixin* 破除迷信), he was arrested and later jailed, probably in Golmud (Geermu 格尔木), Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Family lore says that he was terribly depressed in jail. When someone suggested that he chant Buddhist scripture to make himself feel better, he supposedly replied, "I'm in jail because I was a monk and learned Buddhist scriptures. Now I don't want to chant." Later, he refused to eat and starved to death in prison. The younger monk was a monastery housekeeper who lived in remote mountains herding yaks after 1958. He returned to the rebuilt former Mantuu Monastery in 1994, where he died in 1998.

Grandfather was sent to be the son of adoptive parents in Tughuan Village when he was seven years old. His eldest brother, Limudiinjiri (1912-1992), stayed in his own home. Grandfather's adoptive parents had no son and doted on him. His adoptive father had three bothers. One

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<sup>19</sup> A monastery located in Danma Town. I did not learn the Mongghul names of the two monks who had been my grand uncles.

<sup>20</sup> Anonymous (1993:568).

was a monk who lived in the Nanshan<sup>21</sup> 南山 Mountains (and was thus called Nanshan Badii 'Nanshan Monk') and was said to have circumambulated Qinghai Lake (Koknor) on foot. One was an unmarried, skillful weaver and cook. His adoptive parents had a blood daughter who married a man from Smeen (Ximi 西米) Village, Wushi Town, but had died at an early age during childbirth.

Grandfather was spoiled and pampered well into his youth by both sets of parents. This ended abruptly with implementation of the Tudigaige 土地改革 (Land Reform Movement). In 1952, he was assigned to the Funong 富农 'Rich Man' category. The family was destroyed. Four poor families moved into Grandfather's home and occupied rooms on three sides of the compound. Only two rooms on the northwest side were his to use.

The new 'guests' brought no freedom. The chimney was forced to stop smoking. If Grandfather's chimney smoked the 'guests' notified the village head or local militia who soon rushed in, searched every room, and took whatever food they found. Next, Grandfather and some of his family members were forced to stand in the village's horse yard, primary school ground, or temple ground with their hands tied behind their backs and their heads bowed as punishment.

Grandmother kept her six children alive by secretly going to a valley, cooking potatoes and bread, and then returning home before dawn. Militiamen often came to Grandmother's home and pushed her outside with their rifle butts to receive criticism on the grounds that she and her family had exploited others and had used long-term hired hands. When she was sick, Father pushed her in a cart to the village primary school, the village livestock raising courtyard, or a lane of neighboring Songde Village to

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<sup>21</sup> Located in Ledu 乐都 County.

receive criticism.

Grandfather became a refugee soon after the family was assigned to the Rich Man category because he knew what awaited him if he did not flee. During his three years of wandering, he secretly returned to a relative's home in a neighboring village for one or two nights each year, before leaving the next morning. Knowing that his family still lived and that two grandsons had been born made him happy. He wandered in Qinghai, Gansu 甘肃, and Ningxia Hui 宁夏 回 Autonomous Region during this period, staying on grasslands, at mills, and in temples and tents. He became seriously ill several times and kindhearted people helped him.

He walked through a big gate one day during his wandering and, further inside, noticed many guns. It was an arsenal. Suddenly, two soldiers caught him and, after a period of torture, jailed him for a half month in a dark room. Grandfather spoke Qinghai Chinese Dialect very poorly and the soldiers did not understand him. Eventually they released him after concluding he was insane.

In 1978, the 'Rich Man' category was abolished and Grandfather was thus no longer subject to the cruelties this label brought. He spent the remainder of his life pleasantly with his grandchildren and chanted scriptures in people's homes, in a local temple, and in his own home. He crossed the fields in summer and autumn, watching wheat ripen and sadly closed himself in his home counting prayer beads when drought and hail destroyed the crops. He knew people would lack food and livestock would be hungry. He wanted to help people and crops by chanting.

He told his grandsons that ignorance of Chinese had caused great difficulty in his life and urged his grandchildren to learn it. He said, "If you don't know Chinese, it is difficult to locate a toilet in cities and you won't know how to find a bus to return home."

Grandfather wore a lambskin hat and fur-lined jacket regardless of the weather. He had suffered from stomach illness since childhood. He brought white-colored stones<sup>22</sup> ten kilometers from Chileb (Longwang Shan 龙王山) Mountain.<sup>23</sup> He burned them, ground the bits into fine powder, and took a spoonful everyday. Grandfather had eructation immediately after taking the powder, but this soon passed. The powder dulled his stomach pain. He likely died of stomach cancer in the same year that Grandmother died.

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<sup>22</sup> Mongghul: *xashiduu*.

<sup>23</sup> Located on the boundary between Huzhu County and Menyuan 门源 Hui Autonomous County.

## CHAPTER SIX

### TUGHUAN VILLAGE

I, Limusishiden, was born on a potato-digging day in 1968 in Tughuan Village, Danma Town. To distinguish from another Tughuan Village, located in the present-day Wushi Town, we further describe Mongghul groups. People from Wushi Town, Songduo 松多, and Hongyazigou 红崖子沟 townships in Huzhu County and from Shdara (Dala) 达拉 Mongghul Township, Ledu County refer to Tughuan Village in Danma Town as 'Haliqi Tughuan', and refer to the village in Wushi as 'Fulaan Nara Tughuan'. Fulaan Nara people refer to themselves as Karilang, not Mongghul.

The Dangyan (Dongyuan 东元) Mountains separate the two groups. East of the mountains is Fulaan Nara where Rgulang Monastery is located. To the west is the Haliqi area that consists of Danma Town; Donggou, Dongshan 东山, Donghe 东和, Taizi 台子, and Wufeng 五峰 townships; and Weiyuan 威远 Town.<sup>24</sup> Differences exist between the two groups in language, dress, and custom.

Tughuan<sup>25</sup> is an honorific form of address in Huzhu Mongghul areas. The First Tughuan Living Buddha Luosangladan (罗桑拉丹 Blo bzang la brtan; ?-1679)<sup>26</sup> was born in today's Fulaan Nara Tughuan Village. In 1672,

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<sup>24</sup> The Huzhu County government office is located here.

<sup>25</sup> The *tughuan* title refers to a position established by the Fourth Dalai Lama that was held by Mongghul and Tibetans and abolished in 1930 (Yan and Wang 1994:863-864).

<sup>26</sup> Anonymous 1993:567.

he was elected the *dafatai* 大法台 (abbot) of Rgulang Monastery. Tughuan Nangsuo (Angsuo 昂琐;<sup>27</sup> Nang so) governed much land and many laymen in the Mongghul area. There were three *nangsuo* in Huzhu areas—Tughuan Nangsuo (Tuguan Village), Xewarishidi (Shibadonggou 十八洞沟 or Xiawaer 夏哇尔) Nangsuo (Xewarishidi Village, Wushi Town), and Zhuashidi Nangsuo (Zhuashidi Village, Danma Town). The Tughuan Nangsuo was the most powerful of the three.

Tughuan Tirijiijinbu,<sup>28</sup> a venerated deity, whose

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<sup>27</sup> During the Ming Dynasty 明朝 (1573-1619), the *tughuan* 'internal affairs officer' position was granted by upper level Tibetan religious authorities to Mongghul. There were three *angsuo* in Huzhu: Tuhun 吐浑 *angsuo* (Tuguan *angsuo*), Xiawaer *angsuo*, and Zhade *angsuo*. Monks were eligible for this position and the position was also hereditary. They separately governed the contemporary Hongyazigou, and Halazhigou 哈拉直沟 townships, and Wushi Town. The *angsuo* system was abolished in 1930 when Huzhu County was established (Yan and Wang 1994:864).

<sup>28</sup> Tughuan Tirijiijinbu (*Thu'u ru gcen po*), Zhuashidi Zhunmaasangqan (*Sgrol ma seng chen*), Wughuang (Bahong 巴洪) Jiushidengunbu (*Shug ldan mgon po*), and Xewarishidi Wughuangmiile flew to the Huzhu Mongghul area from the Potala and lived in the temples of Tughuan (Tirijiijinbu) and Wughuang (Jiushidengunbu) villages, Wushi Town; Zhuashidi (Zhunmaasangqan) Village, Danma Town; and Xewarishidi (Wughuangmiile) Village, Songduo Township. Certain local people say one should first pay homage to these four deities before worshipping in the Potala. Every year, Tibetans from Haibei, Hainan 海南, and Gilog (Guoluo 果洛, *Mgo log*) Tibetan autonomous prefectures visit Huzhu on pilgrimage to the four temples

image is kept in the Fulaan Nara Tughuan Village temple, is well-known in Amdo and attracts many pilgrims.

When Grandfather was young, people on horseback dismounted when meeting a Tughuan resident on the road. As mentioned earlier, the Tughuan *niudaari* represented an official position and only Tughuan women could wear it, which they did with great pride.

Tughuan Hurin-Shzin (Tughuan Twenty-Nine) is an annual Mongghul festival held in Fulaan Nara Tughuan Village on the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth days of the sixth lunar month. Early in the morning of the twenty-ninth day, which is the most important day, all Tughuan residents come to the temple where Tirijijinbu is enshrined. Meanwhile, village men carry Tughuan Nengneng (Niangniang 娘娘), a sedan-deity *pram*,<sup>29</sup> to the temple.

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and Rgulang Monastery (source: Limuzhunmaa).

<sup>29</sup> The *pram* is a deity in the form of a sedaned image or a cloth-covered pole held by four men or a man, respectively. The *pram* permeates the life of Mongghul villages. It is available for consultation and represents the possibility that distresses may be alleviated. The *pram* answers questions by moving. In the case of a sedaned *pram*, moving forward is affirmative while moving backwards signifies a negative answer. To signify a positive answer, pole *pram* rapidly move up and down in the hands of those who hold them. *Pram* make their will known through interaction between an elder who asks the *pram* questions and another man who hold the sedan poles; in the case of a pole *pram*, they hold the pole. *Pram* are used to find a suitable spouse, treat illness, exorcise ghosts, ensure well-being, guarantee good harvests, and alleviate droughts.

An individual household may have its own *pram* or a *pram* may be shared by all village or tribe households. Each household has a commodious *pram* room within the

All village residents worship Tirijiijinbu in the morning by burning incense, lighting lamps, offering small amounts of cash (one or two RMB 人民币 notes), prostrating, and circumambulating the temple. Villagers also ask Tughuan Nengneng such questions about village affairs as if they should visit Rgulang Monastery and invite monks to the village to chant scriptures; should villagers go to sacred mountain peaks to burn incense, offer sheep, and prostrate to ensure that drought and hailstones do not harm village crops; and so on.

After questions concerning the whole village are concluded, individuals ask Nengneng about their own families, e.g., how to treat diseases, carry out exorcisms, find suitable spouses for family members, ensure well-being, and guarantee good harvests.

After breakfast, more people converge on the village from other Mongghul areas to pay homage to Tirijiijinbu by burning incense, lighting lamps, prostrating, and circumambulating the temple. Han and Hui peddlers<sup>30</sup> sell noodles, *rangpi* (*niangpi* 酿皮),<sup>31</sup> clothes, farm tools, and such commodities as bowls, pots, scoops, and sickles. Mongghul sit together in a circle along the Wushi River banks drinking liquor and singing *ghadani dog* (mountain songs).<sup>32</sup> They enjoy this time together before harvest time

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home compound of several adobe rooms built within a large, mud-wall compound. The *pram* is clad in a Chinese-style, unlined upper garment, and draped in a monk's robe. Clothing colors are generally red, yellow, pink, and green.

<sup>30</sup> There were Mongghul peddlers beginning in about 2000.

<sup>31</sup> A local snack made from wheat flour and potato starch that may be boiled or steamed and then cut into many long strips. It is spiced with vinegar, chili, and leek.

<sup>32</sup> *Shaonian* 少年/ *Hua'er* 花儿 'love songs' may be

comes in about half a month.

Girls and boys walk together in twos and threes among the crowds, seeking and pursuing lovers. Young men may meet and give their new sweethearts such gifts as ten to twenty RMB. Lovers often retire to secluded areas to talk and, possibly, have sex. Old people meet friends and relatives they have not seen for a long while.

Tughuan people do not hold significant affairs in the third and ninth lunar months. For example, it is taboo to hold weddings, construct rooms, build house-enclosing walls, and go far away on business because Tughuan people are considered descendants of Li Jinwang 李晋王,<sup>33</sup> who once received orders to fight against the enemy in a distant location. He set off in the third lunar month and was defeated in the ninth lunar month. Finally, he returned home with only a few of his soldiers and then ordered his people to avoid important affairs during the third and ninth lunar months.

This ban was solemnly practiced by Grandfather's generation. Father's generation knows of this important taboo for the Mongghul of Tughuan, but has taken less notice of it. Nowadays, it is mostly ignored.

Tughuan people moved to live in such other areas as Xewarishidi Village, Wushi Town to herd livestock. Residents of Tuhun Village, Xunrang 遵让 Township; and Tuguan Village, Jingyang 景阳 Township, Datong 大通 Hui and Mongghul Autonomous County are Tughuan people who migrated there from today's Fulaan Nara Tughuan Village. Many Tughuan people also dwell in today's Wufeng Township and Weiyuan Town, Huzhu County.

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explicitly sexual. It is taboo to sing them in the home.

<sup>33</sup> Li Jinwang (856-908) was a famous Tang Dynasty 唐朝 (618-907) general.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### FATHER (LIMUZHUNMAA)

Father was born in 1942 in Tughuan Village and never attended school. He began learning Chinese in his twenties when Han moved into such neighboring villages as Liu{jia} 柳家, Pudang, Njaa (Wen{jia} 温家), and Songde from Henan 河南 Province, Tianjin 天津 Municipality, and other areas, including elsewhere in Qinghai Province. Father did not know why these people were assigned to live in certain households, who were required to provide food, housing, and everything else that they needed.

At that time, several natural villages were classified as a single large administrative village. Villagers from the natural villages often worked collectively. Commonly, several administrative villages' residents gathered to work in a certain village, creating opportunities for Mongghul to learn Chinese during periods of collective work.

The village administrative committee sent Father to Aba 阿巴 (Rnga ba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan 四川 Province<sup>34</sup> in 1966 to do roadwork for six months. In 1977 he was sent to Banma 班玛 (Pad ma) County,<sup>35</sup> Gilog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province where he did lumber work for a year. This also helped Father's Chinese improve. He said, "The Mongghul in my work team helped me, so daily communication with Han people was not a big problem."

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<sup>34</sup> On the border between Jiuzhi 久治 (Gcig sgril) and Banma counties, Gilog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

<sup>35</sup> He could not remember the specific place name.

Father sent one or two letters to Mother annually. They were written in Chinese by whomever he found to write them. The content of his letters was short and simple, e.g., "I am well, and I'll return home at such-and-such time." Mother often asked Limuduriji to come and read the few lines.

Father, like many older Mongghul, uses symbols<sup>36</sup> to do calculations. Such figures are made on the ground with a stick, tree twig, or a finger.

I	1
II	2
III	3
III	4
—	5
—	6
—	7
—	8
—	9
—	10

1,247 is written vertically as below:

I  
II  
III  
—

There are many marks recording numbers on the walls of my parents' home in Tughuan Village that have been made by white chalk and the black-carbon-rods from worn-out batteries. Only Father knows exactly what each refers to, e.g., the number of sheep belonging to the home, the amount of money someone borrowed, how many bags

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<sup>36</sup> Local Chinese called it *poniangzhang* 婆娘账 'the way women calculate'.

of grain were harvested in a year, an exact time to perform a rite for a family deity in our or another home, and so on.

When I was a primary school student, I often saw Father and Grandfather sitting together, calculating in Mongghul, their fingers drawing in the dirt of the courtyard. Only men did such calculations.

Father wore a thick *laxjang* 'coarse garment', when he was fifteen. There were, at that time, professional *huujang* 'weavers'. Adults and children spun yarn from sheep, goat, and yak wool when they were free from work. The yarn was given to weavers to work with at their homes, or weavers were invited to the customers' homes. *Huujang* wove *laxjang* on simple portable *huujazi* 'looms'. The weavers were Mongghul.<sup>37</sup>

My siblings and I eagerly anticipated Father's stories. He was extremely interested in hearing folktales in his youth. When I was very young, Father often went to my neighbor great-uncle's home, which at that time was an informal folktale-telling center. Many tellers and listeners from Tughuan Village and such neighboring villages as Jilog (Jiaoluo 角落) gathered to avidly listen to and tell folktales.

Mother often scolded Father for leaving home after supper and returning late at night, but this did not stop him. Particularly, when my great-uncle's sister's husband, Zangdii (1919-2007), visited Tughuan Village from Jilog Village, Danma Town, Father accompanied him to listen to his folktales. Zangdii's nickname was Rngui<sup>38</sup> for he could

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<sup>37</sup> Limusishiden has never seen a loom for making cloth for coarse garments, but has seen looms for making *fuuda* 'long bags' in the streets of his village and neighboring villages as well.

<sup>38</sup> Xue Rengui 薛仁贵 (613-683) was a general during the Tang Dynasty.

tell long stories of the Chinese general, Xue Rengui in a lively manner. People surrounding the area called him Rngui Aadee (Rngui Grandfather). He was often invited to tell stories and people also visited his house with small gifts of liquor and bread and asked him to tell stories.

When Zangdii was invited to Great-uncle's home, he was asked to sit in the important seat on a *pei*,<sup>39</sup> while the audience sat around a smoky fire under the dim light of a rape-oil wick. Audience members ceaselessly filled his tea bowl and offered liquor while they also drank tea and liquor in a haze of smoke produced by the audience puffing on their long-stem *huangsa* 'pipes'. All the audience on the *pei* at my great-uncle's home were men. Great-uncle's daughters-in-law sat by the cooking stove in the kitchen, listening intently while sewing.

Father also told tales when villagers collectively herded sheep on the mountainsides, and guarded harvested crops for the administrative village on the threshing ground, if winnowing had not been completed that day.

Father's most faithful listeners were his children. We eagerly asked him every night after supper what folktale he would tell, or we asked him to continue a story if he had not finished it the night before. Father answered, "Please be patient! I'm thinking what story I should tell you

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<sup>39</sup> The *pei* was wonderful in winter. Felt rugs were spread on it, while blankets and skins were folded and piled along the wall for use at night. A few different-sized wooden cases along the wall contained the family's clothes, the treasures of the mother (needle box, sewing materials), *taligha* (roasted highland barley flour), utensils for distilling liquor, and there was also a small cupboard. A gun, a stringed musical instrument, clothes, and so on were hung on pegs along the wall (Schram 2006 [1954-1961]:193).

tonight," or, if he had not concluded a story earlier, "Where were we in the story I started last night?" We then reminded him of where he had left off and he continued from that point, after reviewing the story's name and main content.

Father sat in the center of the *pei* near the wall, which is regarded as the most important seat. His tea bowl sat on a small rectangular table near him. A dim rape-oil lamp was put on the *langang* by his right side, where Mother sat to have enough light to embroider, sew, and patch worn-out clothes. My brothers and sister sat crossed-legged near Father in a circle around the smoky fire, eagerly listening to Father. My elder brother and I kept Father's tea bowl full and tended the fire to keep it from sending out excessive fumes.

Father smoked all day long and even more so when he told stories. He puffed a long-stemmed *huangsa* filled with pungent, locally grown tobacco, which he kept in his embroidered tobacco pouch. He continually puffed and then emptied ash from the brass bowl with a metal hook tied to the tobacco pouch. Father put embers from the smoldering fire into his brass bowl, puffed, and emptied the ash regularly. His heavy smoking made him cough and spit into the smoldering fire. In 2009, Father is the only man who still smokes a pipe in Tughuan Village. He prefers his pipe and does not smoke cigarettes, no matter their quality or price.

We listened in rapt attention. Sometimes we interrupted him for more details about the story or asked him to repeat something if we didn't understand well. He was happy to repeat and explain when we interrupted him. Occasionally he said:

All stories provide useful knowledge in making our lives better. Will your children be able to return home if some

of you suddenly move to a strange area, far away? How will you tell somebody where your home is if you seek help? Tell them your home is located in Qinghai Province, Huzhu Mongghul Autonomous County, Danma Township,<sup>40</sup> Songde Administrative Village, Tughuan Natural Village. Right? If you say this, people can help you come home.

Mother sewed under the dim lamp, quietly enjoying our time together. At about ten p.m. in winter she urged us to go to bed early because she was afraid we would be unable to get up on time the next morning and that she also might get up late the next morning and thus delay cooking breakfast and doing housework.

Father slept on the *yikang* with his older sons while Mother slept on the *bankang* with my sister and youngest brother. We encouraged Father to conclude the unfinished story or start a new story before we promised to fall asleep. Sometimes we reviewed stories that we had already heard, e.g., what were their similarities, who were good people, who were evil people, and so on.

When Father had exhausted all his folktales, we asked him to repeat them again. One night, he had to leave to guard crops on the threshing ground. In order to receive our agreement he told us that he was going to listen to new folktales that night and would tell us what he had heard the following night. This made us happy and we finally let him leave.

Father told us stories in Mongghul, for example, the Chinese stories of Xue Pinggui 薛平贵<sup>41</sup> and Xue Rengui.

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<sup>40</sup> Danma Township became Danma Town in 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Xue Pinggui of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) was from a poor family and later married the emperor's daughter Wang Baochuan 王宝钏. Her father opposed her marriage and

Father said that some Mongghul folk tellers could repeat the contents of very thick Chinese books about Xue Rengui and Xue Pinggui after hearing them only once.

Later, modern radio (from about 1980) and TV sets (from about 1985) gradually entered village households. Children grew older and were educated in the Chinese language. Father stopped telling folktales.<sup>42</sup> Father worked hard in the field and at home and was eager to display himself in public during the annual Danma Hua'er Festival held from the eleventh to the fifteenth days of the sixth lunar month, and at Qan, the Rgulang Monastery Masked Dance Festival, held on the eighth day of the sixth lunar month. He wore his embroidered Mongghul shirt, sash, long robe, and a Tibetan-style long knife that an ancestor had purportedly brought back from Tibet, on his right side. He also wore dark glasses with dark stone lenses made in Beijing 北京. Thus decorated, he strolled in the sea of people, enjoying himself.

He told his children:

Mongghul clothes are the most beautiful clothing. They are so beautiful and colorful in the festivals in our Mongghul area. Who notices modern fashionable clothing even though it is worth thousands of *yuan* 元 at Mongghul festivals?

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drove her out of his home. The couple then lived in a cave. Later, Xue was a frontier soldier for eighteen years while Wang faithfully waited in the cave.

<sup>42</sup> In 2009, a few Mongghul youths from a few poor remote areas in Fulaan Nara still visit well-known folksong singers to learn Mongghul folksongs, but this centuries-old practice is now nearly dead.

Father saved money and sewed Mongghul robes, fox-fur-lined hats, and embroidered shirts for his children. This was in the 1980s. In 2009, few people in Mongghul villages wore Mongghul clothing at festivals.

Father regularly left home to earn extra cash income from 1985 to 1988. He went to dig caterpillar fungus in Tianjun 天峻 County, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the fourth lunar month of 1988 after seeding the fields. A month later he returned home empty-handed. When he arrived in Xining he met a physically handicapped man and had the following exchange:

Man: Elder Brother, could you please help me?

Father: Help what?

Man: Do you want to earn some money?

Father: Where? What? How much will you pay?

Man: Digging gold in Qumalai 曲麻莱 (Chu dmar leb), in Yushu 玉树 (Yul shul) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. I will pay you ten RMB a day.

Father (to himself): Earning some money before the harvest two months later would be good. The amount of the payment is not very important.

Father: I can only come for two months because I must return before harvest. Is that OK?

Man: Sure. You can come back two months later.

Father went with five Han men, two of whom were from Taizi and Nanmenxia 南门峡 townships, Huzhu County and the others were from Huangyuan and Huangzhong 湟中 counties. They washed sand and gravel along a river in Qumalai and found no gold. Two months later Father wanted to return home for the harvest and because I would take the university entrance examination. He needed the payment from the gold boss to meet the

university cost if I passed the exam. He asked the boss for permission to leave but was told that he could not return. The boss threatened to beat him if he left without permission.

Finally, Father secretly left and walked into the boundless grassland. He picked up a branch and pretended it was our family *pram*. He made three prostrations, put the branch on his right shoulder, beseeched our family *pram*, and asked the *pram* to tell him the direction in which he should walk. The *pram* made Father walk backward if he went in the wrong direction. In this way, Father walked as determined by the *pram*.

He slept on the grass at night, saw fox running on the grassland, and heard wolves howling. Three days later his feet had ulcerated in the rainboots he wore, which made walking painful. Later, he came upon a Tibetan tent in a narrow valley and met a ferocious Tibetan dog. The people in the tent ignored him.

Father loudly chanted a Tibetan Buddhist scripture at which point a man from the tent came out and invited Father inside. Father recounted his story in his local Han dialect. They listened sympathetically, gave him plenty of food, and asked him to spend the night with them. The next day the Tibetan man sent him on horseback to the nearest road where a warm-hearted truck driver brought him to Xining. Father then begged food and money from some restaurants and thus got enough money for a bus ticket back home.

Father credits that Buddhist scripture with saving his life.

In recognition of the difficulties illiteracy has caused him, Father urged his children to learn Chinese and never asked his children to do housework or work outside the village as long as they were studying.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MOTHER (SAIHUA)

Mother's parents' home is in Yomajaa Village, Donggou Township. She was the second of four children. Her younger sister, Niiga (b. 1950), married into Lughuari (Dacaizigou 大菜子沟) Village, Taizi Township. Her elder sister, Puriji (b. 1942), married and moved into her husband's home in Hara Bulog (Heiquan 黑泉) Village, Donggou Township. Qilunbog (b. 1958) is her younger brother. Mother's father, Rnqan (1918-1984), and her mother, Qishihua (1923-2003), were illiterate and from the same village.

Before Mother married Father and moved into his home in 1963, very few women from Donggou married and moved to Danma because people thought Danma was poor, remote, and certain Danma households were thought to have *modaya* (*maodaye* 猫大爷).<sup>43</sup> It was not, in fact, until

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<sup>43</sup> *Modaya* behave as do spirits and ghosts, are often in rich homes where they are faithful and loyal, steal grain and bring it to the granaries of their masters, and make people ill if they take something from their masters' homes. Mongghul believe *modaya* are common in the Fulaan Nara area, including Wushi, Hongyazigou, and Songduo, Huzhu County, and Shdara, Ledu County. Mongghul are very afraid of *modaya*. Danma is not part of the Fulaan Nara area, though it adjoins it. A few villages in Danma were thought to have *modaya* in 2009. This explains why Donggou Mongghul regarded Danma as a place to avoid and did not want their daughters to live there.

1983 that increasing numbers of women from Donggou married and moved to Danma.

Mother gave birth to seven children. Her first-born was a son who died within a month of his birth. The sixth child—a boy—died at the age of four from diarrhea. Modern medicines were unavailable and ghost-expelling rites were ineffective. My elder brother, Limudanzhuu, graduated from Inner Mongolia Forestry College, Huhehaote 呼和浩特 City, and was assigned to work in Huzhu Forestry Bureau, Huzhu County. My younger brother, Niidosirang (b. 1974), studied physics at Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou 兰州 City, Gansu Province and was assigned a job as a teacher in Huzhu County. My youngest brother dropped out of senior middle school because his grades were poor. He is a farmer in Tughuan Village. My only sister, Qiyansuu (b. 1971), never attended school, a reflection of a local culture that does not value women's education. She married a man in Shgeayili Village, Donggou Township and divorced him two years later because her in-laws mistreated her in terms of food, clothing, and daily life. After living for about two years in her parents' home she remarried and moved into her husband's home in Shdangja Village, Danma Town.

Mother enjoyed singing *ghadani dog* with other women in the fields when they were weeding and sometimes suddenly uttered funeral lamentations while sewing at home alone when she was free from outside work on rainy and snowy days.

Shge giixangdi kurisa,  
Shge giixang huuwa soja.  
Dalangi nesidi muni aawii yiu,  
Shge giixang huusala lii liji,  
Qighaan rmaani turani ruasa,  
Qighaan rmaa huuwa soja.

Reaching the big lane,  
The big lane is deserted.  
My seventy year old father,  
Not only is the big lane deserted,  
When passing inside white walls,  
The white household walls are also deserted.<sup>44</sup>

I asked Mother why she lamented and she said:

I must lament at your father's parents and my parents' funerals. It will be a great disgrace if I don't lament well. I must practice to remember the words and melody.

Tughuan villagers share a common ancestor, consequently, village women visit when someone dies and when the deceased's daughters come to mourn. Mother participated in many funerals in Tughuan Village. She is a gifted lamenter and is respected for this ability.

Frequent persecution from being placed in the Rich Man category made Mother timid. She often said, "Don't quarrel with others! Don't gain advantage unfairly!"

It rained for more than a month in the summer of 1977 after village administrators sent Father to work in Banma County. Our roofs leaked. Late one afternoon, Mother felt pain in her belly and knew she was about to give birth. She urged her children to go to bed with her earlier than usual. It was about five p.m. Suddenly, Mother shouted, "Get on the floor at once! The wall will collapse!" when we heard the wall by us groaning.

We jumped to the floor just before the adobe sidewall of the sleeping room fell across the sleeping *yikang* and *bankang*. Dust filled the air. Bits and pieces of

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<sup>44</sup> Limusishiden and Stuart (1998:132).

adobe bricks flew above, leaving a wide-open space in the wall. We were dumfounded. A bit later we moved the tumbled adobe bricks outside, swept the *bankang* and *yikang*, and covered the hole in the wall with a large piece of cloth.

We got back on the *bankang* and *yikang* again, and fearfully tried to sleep. A while later Mother gave birth to Danjansirang (b. 1977). She asked us to bring a pair of scissors and thread to her. She cut and tied the baby's umbilical cord and sent me to Limujansan's home to ask Zhunmaahua to come. When she arrived, she helped Mother bury the baby's placenta under the floor by the *bankang*<sup>45</sup> and cooked hot soup to warm Mother's weak body.

Mother rarely watches television other than programs about Mongghul, programs featuring herding people caring for their sheep and yaks on the grassland, and 'Animal World'. She enjoys the second two because they are largely self-explanatory. Her very limited Chinese makes understanding Chinese-language programs difficult.

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<sup>45</sup> Burying a placenta under the ground by a childbearing *bankang* is believed to increase the likelihood the woman will have more children.

## CHAPTER NINE

### LIMUSISHIDEN

Our extended family had grown to twelve members in about 1975. There were many conflicts between family members. Mr. Liu 刘<sup>46</sup> had moved out of the village taking the wood from this home, but leaving behind his enclosing adobe wall. Father told Grandfather that he wanted to live at the site of Liu's former home. Grandfather agreed. However, because Father was the son of a man in the former Rich Man category, the administrative leaders allocated Father only half of the area in the enclosing wall. The other half went to another village family.

Father's parents gave my parents only three rooms when we moved. This angered Mother, who no longer wanted my grandparents to look after her children. We were thus left in the village lanes to play with other children when she left home early in the morning and returned at night. We had wonderful times playing hide-and-seek, visiting relatives, and so on in the lanes.<sup>47</sup> We enjoyed our time in the lanes so much that we often forgot lunch. Mother sometimes baked bread made of highland barley flour or boiled potatoes and put them in our

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<sup>46</sup> Mr. Liu moved to Tughuan Village and built a home there in 1971 and then moved to his natal home in Banjiawan 班家湾 Village, Weiyuan Town in 1974. He was the first Han to have lived in Tughuan Village in the memory of village elders.

<sup>47</sup> See the Appendix for a description of games played at this time.

garment pouches for lunch. We often did not eat until Mother returned and prepared supper.

Children wore Mongghul-style shirts that buttoned on the right with two cloth-knitted buttons; a warm Chinese garment, which also buttoned on the right with two cloth-knitted buttons; and a pair of thin pants. These garments were worn regardless of the season. We were hot in summer and cold in winter. We wore a sash around our waists and put food and toys in the pouch above our sash. We were barefoot in summer and some boys were also barefoot on snowy days. It was common to have bleeding chilblains, which we smeared with lard.

All the children spoke only Mongghul. We had no chance to visit Weiyuan Town (the county seat), which was twenty kilometers away, or even Danma Town center, which was only about two kilometers from the village. Our village was a mental and physical world that seemed wholly Mongghul.

My family had a good relationship with a Mongol monk in Rgulang Monastery named Schin.<sup>48</sup> His parents had piously offered him to Tughuan Living Buddha when he was a little boy when Tughuan passed through their home place in Inner Mongolia.<sup>49</sup> He was thus brought back to the monastery where he became a monk. He was jailed in 1958 during the *pochumixin* movement. He returned to Rgulang after being released a year later, went to his home area in Inner Mongolia and stayed for several months, and then returned to Rgulang. He spoke perfect Mongghul and often visited my home and my family regularly visited him in the monastery with gifts of meat, bread, and wheat

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<sup>48</sup> We did not learn his birth and death dates.

<sup>49</sup> We are unsure of the location of his home in Inner Mongolia.

straw.<sup>50</sup>

When Schin grew old, Father's elder brother, Limujansan, and Grandfather wanted me to be Schin's monk pupil, inherit his property (his house and furniture), and continue the tradition of my family sending sons to monasteries to become monks. Such a decision would also have relieved Father's heavy burden of assisting four sons marry and building new houses for each.

One day, Limujansan said to Father:

Zhunmaa, send Limusishiden to become a monk under Schin's supervision in Rgulang Monastery. We will then have a monk and your burden will be less in making arrangements for him later.

Father replied:

I know my family is poor and it is my responsibility to help them live independently after they marry. However, I will not send him to be a monk now. Learning Chinese in school is valuable for him. My family will not send sons to become monks beginning with his generation. Earlier, my family had many monks. Many of them had prestigious Tibetan Buddhist degrees. Some became monastery heads and fought against rebellions and invaders.

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<sup>50</sup> Mongghul send pork to sons, paternal and maternal uncles, great-uncles, and friends after swine are slaughtered in the twelfth lunar month. They also send flour and straw to be used as fuel to monk relatives. In return, they occasionally receive butter and convenient accommodation from the same monks when they visit the monastery. Such a relationship encourages monks to go to their supporters' homes when invited to chant.

Two graves in our family graveyard are of monks who died fighting against rebellions and invaders. They were cremated and their remains were buried there. This sort of death meant their bone ashes were not scattered on the mountainsides by the monasteries where they lived, as is common practice.

### Encounters With the Chinese Language

In 1975 when I was seven years old, some boys in my village who were two to three years older than me were sent two kilometers away to the Danma Township center to buy kerosene to fuel the lamps in their homes. I admired them for being able to do something like this all by themselves. I was particularly impressed because they could speak enough Chinese to the shop assistants to purchase the kerosene.

A number of miscommunications occurred between the shop assistants and Mongghul shoppers, particularly for Mongghul women and children because their Chinese was very poor. The ensuing jokes became favorite topics on buses and near shop gates.

#### Joke One

Some Mongghul women and children went to a shop and asked a shop assistant in local Chinese dialect, "*Jingli banaogao maigei* (*Jingli bawoge maigei* 经理把我个卖给) Shop assistant make-me-to sell-to."

The shop assistant understood this to mean, "I want to sell myself to you," though the customer meant "Shop assistant, can I buy such-and-such a thing?"

#### Joke Two

Once a Mongghul boy went to a shop and asked the shop assistant in local Chinese, "*Jingli tiuqi you mo you?* (*Jingli*

*saozhou you mei you* 经理扫帚有没有) Can I buy a broom?" *Tiuqi* is Mongghul for broom, and the remaining is local Chinese dialect. Such questions puzzled the Han shop assistants. At that time, the job of shop assistant was regarded as the best in the countryside.

### Joke Three

A Mongghul woman was on the way to her parents' home one frigid winter day and felt cold. When she saw a truck coming in the distance, she waved and the truck stopped. The lady said to the driver in the cab, "*Sifu, naonizi toushang zuogaoha lai? (Shifu wo zuodao ni touli xingma?* 师傅我坐到你头里行吗? Driver, can I sit on your head, please)?"

She meant, "Driver, can I (take and have) a seat in your cab please (because it is warm inside the cab)?"

The driver understood and joked, "You not only want to take my truck but also sit on my head."

### Joke Four

A Mongghul woman went to buy cloth in a shop. She spoke to a shop assistant, who guessed at what she meant and started measuring cloth the lady pointed at with a one *chi*<sup>51</sup> 尺 length ruler, and then asked her how much she wanted.

The lady did not know how to say *chi* in the local Chinese dialect, and told the assistant to keep measuring.

Suddenly she said, "OK! Stop!" waving her hands, implying it was enough.

She had counted the measurements as the assistant measured and told him to stop when she counted the length she wanted.

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<sup>51</sup> One meter = three *chi*.

Today, as Chinese rapidly spreads in Mongghul society such language communication difficulties and jokes are infrequent. Most Mongghul now understand the local Chinese dialect. Many Mongghul have small shops in their villages and along roadsides near their villages, where it is easy and convenient to purchase what they want in Mongghul. All parents send their children to school as early as the age of seven, thus children begin learning Chinese at an earlier age than before. Television sets are in every home, also making it easier for children to learn Chinese.

I learned my first Chinese one day as I was running and a boy behind me shouted, "*Ni banao deng zhao* (*Ni deng zhao wo* 你等着我). You wait for me." I did not understand. I worried about making silly mistakes while shopping until later, when I had studied for a couple of years in primary school.

## Education

My parents considered not sending me to school at all and instead, having me stay at home to care for my younger sister and our home. However, one day a villager held a small class in the Tughuan Village storeroom. He was one of the first Mongghul people to receive formal Chinese education in Huzhu County. He taught basic Chinese for about one hour everyday inside that small, dark storeroom. Mother thought I could both look after our home and also learn Chinese, since the 'classroom' was near our home. I was thus allowed to attend the class as long as I took my younger sister along with me.

The class lasted a month. It was interesting and I asked the teacher questions. He, in turn, thought I was capable of learning and suggested to Mother, "Saihua, send your child to school. He will be able to learn well in school later." Mother agreed and asked him to give me a Chinese

name. The teacher chose the Chinese name: Li Dechun. My surname Li is probably derived from Li *tusi*<sup>52</sup> 土司 (native chief).

In late summer, my family had a Mao 毛 suit made for me in a shop in Danma Town, bought an ink pen and green shoulder bag for me, and sent me to Songde Primary School where I registered under the name 'Li Dechun'. The school was four kilometers from Tughuan Village.

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<sup>52</sup>According to Yan and Wang (1994:863), the *tusi* system was an administrative system used in Mongol, Tibetan, and other minority areas in northwest and southwest China during the Yuan 元朝 (1206-1368), Ming, and Qing 清朝 (1636-1911) dynasties. The government designated tribal officials and allowed them to govern their own ethnic peoples. Yuan Dynasty tribal leaders were granted numerous titles and established as officials at the *fu* 府 (government office), *zhou* 州 (prefecture), and *xian* 县 (county) levels. The Ming government had *xuanwei* 宣慰, *xuanfu* 宣抚, and *anfu* 安抚 positions in the military and *zhifu* 知府, *zhizhou* 知州, and *zhixian* 知县 positions in the civil service. These titles were hereditary. *Tusi* were not only responsible to the central government for contributions and requisition, but also exercised traditional power in their respective local areas. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Qinghai had more than sixty *tusi*; there were forty *tusi* in the present Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. The remaining *tusi* controlled the present Minhe 民和, Ledu, Ping'an 平安, Huzhu, Huangzhong, Xining, Datong, and Xunhua 循化 counties. In 1931, the *tusi* system was abrogated in agricultural areas, and former officers became landlords. The *tusi* system in herding areas lasted until the period of democratic reform in 1958. (We thank Dr. Chen Qiang 陈强 for translating this information).

Mongghul children who entered primary school wore Chinese clothes and were given a Chinese name by schoolteachers during registration. Family members, villagers, and relatives continued to use their Mongghul names.

I have three brothers—Limudanzhuu, received his Chinese name, Li Deqing, from a Chinese teacher when he registered in school; Niidosirang, received his Chinese name, Li Deyuan, from my uncle (Limuduriji) who learned Chinese in school; and Danjansirang (b. 1977), received his Chinese name, Li Deming, given by a teacher when he registered in school.

I enrolled in primary school at the age of nine. Father led me to school early one morning and said to the teacher after I was registered, "Please care for my son. He cannot speak even a little Chinese." Then he said to me, "Stay here and learn. I'll come pick you up by the road this afternoon, OK?" I nodded and Father walked away.

Over eighty percent of Songde Primary School students were Mongghul. The others were Han. Some Han students spoke Mongghul because their families lived in Mongghul villages. Some understood Mongghul but never spoke it. Consequently, communication in Mongghul among the students was not a problem. The main problem was that all the lessons were taught in Chinese and teachers asked the students to speak Chinese during class. I found it very difficult to understand in the beginning.

There were five teachers in the primary school. Only one was Mongghul. He was a *minban* 民办<sup>53</sup> teacher. Learning Chinese was difficult for all the Mongghul children. Red ink covered my homework and exercise papers daily. I spoke Chinese poorly and feared being ridiculed if I asked the teacher incomprehensible questions.

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<sup>53</sup> An unofficial position that pays a small salary.

Mongghul children sat with each other because it was easier to communicate. I mostly played with Mongghul children during the noon break and the ten minute breaks between classes. I walked with children from my village on the way to school in the morning and when returning home in the afternoon.

When I reached grade three my oral Chinese had improved, but my writing was still full of mistakes. Our Chinese language teacher once asked each of us to write a composition. I wrote a one-page composition, thinking it would satisfy the teacher. The teacher indicated a number of problems. A key mistake was a number of sentences written using Mongghul grammar. Later, based on these comments, I paid more attention when I wrote Chinese, but improvement was slow.

Reading Chinese was another obstacle. We had to spend time consulting a Chinese dictionary before we could understand. Pronunciation was another problem. Teachers wrote new words and asked students to repeat them over and over. Teachers taught in the local Chinese dialect.

Primary school was difficult. Every morning I got up early, washed my face, ate bread, and drank hot water. Occasionally, I was lucky to have boiled potatoes. Village students summoned each other and then we started off for school. We had to cross a ravine without a bridge, walk through two villages, and walked down a long twisting path before reaching school about an hour later just as the first morning class bell rang.

We never returned home for lunch. We went to a spring located a kilometer from the school and got water from the spring in glass bottles we brought from home. We took the water to the school and ate bread we brought from home.

There was no heating in the school. In the winter, we were very cold. Teachers talked on the platform in front

of the classroom as students stamped their feet to stay warm. On very cold days, the teachers sent students home.

My oral Chinese had improved to the point I could communicate with my Han classmates when I was in grade four. I played with Mongghul and Han children and often wrestled with students. Certain Han students kindly invited me to visit their homes to have fruit at noon. Sometimes, they brought boiled rice wrapped in bamboo leaves for me, something Mongghul traditionally never cooked.

I graduated from primary school then took and passed the examination to Danma Junior Middle School, located in Danma Town center. The school had three grades and nine classes. Each grade had three classrooms. Mongghul students made up approximately nine percent of the total number of students. There were five or six Mongghul students among sixty to seventy students in each classroom.

Mongghul parents did not like sending their children to school at that time. This has changed, because parents today do not question the value of education and also because of the nine year compulsory education policy which was started to perform from 1986.

Many Mongghul children dropped out during the time I was in junior middle school in the early 1980s. For instance, I and five Mongghul children from my village and a neighbor village registered the same year. Three had dropped out to become farmers by the end of the second term. One was recruited by the County Sports Committee in Weiyuan Town to be trained in long distance running. I was the only one who continued in school.

There was only one Mongghul teacher<sup>54</sup> in the

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<sup>54</sup> He was originally from Danma Town, spoke limited Mongghul, moved to the school from a grassland area in Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture after having

middle school during my three years of study there. My Chinese improved, but I sometimes still used Mongghul grammar, which earned laughter. For example, '*Laosi naojia yigao hui* (*Laoshi wojia yige hui* 老师我家一个回) teacher I home one back." I was trying to say "Teacher, can I return home?"

Three years later, I enrolled in Huzhu Nationality Middle School, Weiyuan Town, where I studied for three years (1985-1988). Founded in 1982, it is the largest complete (junior and senior middle school classes) boarding minority school in Qinghai Province with an enrollment of more than 1,815 in 2002. There were twenty-six classes of which thirteen were junior middle school classes and thirteen were senior middle school classes. Of the school's 117 employees, twenty-six were Mongghul. Of the 1,815 students, 912 were male, 903 were female, and 1,374 were Mongghul. More than ninety-eight percent of the Mongghul students were from rural areas in Huzhu County.

It was the fourth year after the school was built when I entered. My class had fifty students of whom more than seventy percent were Mongghul. The others were Tibetan and Hui. More than twenty were girls. All the students were from Huzhu. Students spoke Chinese in class and at official school functions. Mongghul students spoke Mongghul to each other at other times.

By 2000, numerous Mongghul had graduated from colleges and universities in and out of Qinghai Province and most had salaried, regular employment, bringing benefit to their families and the Mongghul area.

Mongghul students could only study in Huzhu Number One and Number Two middle schools in Weiyuan

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worked some years there, spent a year at the school, and then left after finding a job in Weiyuan Town.

Town before Huzhu Nationality Middle School was founded. Owing to the students' poor command of Chinese, few Mongghul students qualified to study in these schools. Only two or three Mongghul were in each class. This dramatically changed with the founding of Huzhu Nationality Middle School. Mongghul parents willingly sent children there because most students are Mongghul, creating a Mongghul-friendly environment. Boarding is also possible. Furthermore, minority students are given a small stipend.

I passed the university entrance examination in 1988 and enrolled in the Biomedicine Class, Qinghai Medical College (1988-1993), Xining City. I was the first Mongghul-speaking student ever enrolled from Huzhu County. My class had three Minhe Mangghuer students. This was the first time for me to meet Mangghuer. I was impressed that they spoke Mangghuer openly when they were together, without fear of people recognizing their ethnicity, which was different from what I had experienced in Huzhu County.

My roommates regularly wrote letters to their parents and I was again painfully reminded of how my parents were illiterate.

In 1993, I was assigned a job in Qinghai Medical College Affiliated Hospital,<sup>55</sup> in Xining City. In 2009, I had worked there for sixteen years and met many Mongghul seeking treatment from Datong Hui and Mongghul Autonomous County.<sup>56</sup> This also gave me the

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<sup>55</sup> In 2004, Qinghai Medical College Affiliated Hospital was renamed 'Qinghai University Affiliated Hospital' and Qinghai Medical College was renamed 'Qinghai University Medical College'.

<sup>56</sup> Limusishiden and his wife, Jugui, visited Xunbu 遂布, Tuhun, and Bali 巴里 villages, Xunrang Township during the Spring Festival of 2001 and met three old men and one

opportunity to learn more about their villages. I talked to those from Huzhu in Mongghul about their sickness, which made it easier for them to communicate the nature of their illness.

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old woman (all born before 1941) who spoke fluent Mongghul; several other adult men and women born 1950-1960 spoke Mongghul poorly; about twenty young villagers born 1960-1970 could understand Mongghul; and people born after 1970 neither spoke nor understood Mongghul in Tuhun Village. Only one old man spoke poor Mongghul in Xunbu Village and no one spoke Mongghul in Bali Village.

From 1993-2008, Limusishiden met many Mongghul from Datong County seeking treatment in Qinghai University Affiliated Hospital, but never met one who could speak a single sentence of Mongghul.

## CHAPTER TEN

### JIJIALING VILLAGE IN 2007

In December 2007, I spent six RMB on a bus ticket from Xining to Baojia 包家 Pass<sup>57</sup> on the old road. I then took a taxi for a half-hour and paid six RMB from Baojia Pass to Jija Nuri Village, Dongshan Township to gain insight into village changes occurring in the early twenty-first century. The village is located in the south part of Dongshan Township and is one of the nearest Mongghul villages to Xining City. It is also where Louis Schram (1883–1971)<sup>58</sup> and Dominik Schröder (1910–1974)<sup>59</sup> spent time. Schröder did most of his research here and in neighboring villages.

The village is located in a valley surrounded by mountains and, at the time of my trip, had 186 households and 821 residents, all of whom spoke Mongghul and were classified as Tu. The total arable land was 3,825 *mu* 亩, (255 hectares; 4.65 *mu* (0.31 hectares)/ person) and was on steep slopes. Irrigation was impossible. Drinking water was a serious problem and all village households had at least two underground water cisterns that collected rain and melted

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<sup>57</sup> A Han village located halfway between Xining City and Weiyuan Town. In 2008, the bus fee from Xining to the village was six RMB. The village lay along an old road located west of Tangchuan 塘川 Valley. A new freeway opened in October 2006 on the east side of the valley. Xining City-Weiyuan Town travel required twenty minutes by car.

<sup>58</sup> See Schram (2006 [1954–1961]:477).

<sup>59</sup> See Schröder (1952/1953).

snow, providing a water source for people and livestock. Sixty-seven village residents were over the age of sixty. The village had eighteen young bachelors who, because of the village's poverty had not married.

Jijialing Valley had seven small subsidiary natural villages positioned on mountain slopes. Tractors were used by better-off families for transport. However, most households continued to use livestock as beasts of burden. Transportation stopped on rainy and snowy days until paths dried. Trucks and cars had great difficulty in reaching the small natural villages because of the narrowness and steep turns of the tracks. Wheat production was a variable 200 kilograms per *mu* (3,000 kilograms per hectare). There were 107 households with telephones (many men had mobile phones)<sup>60</sup> and every household had a TV that could show programs twenty-four hours a day. Little interest was observed in learning Mongghul songs and folklore.

Increasing numbers of young Mongghul women leave the village to earn money in Xining (one young woman was working in Shanghai 上海) after some education at the junior or senior middle school levels. They work in restaurants and supermarkets, where they often meet young men their age, become romantically involved, marry, and move into the men's homes. Ten village women had married and lived with husbands outside the village.

Young village men followed the same pattern. In 2007, there were ten wives in the village who were not Mongghul.

A total of nineteen villagers obtained salaried employment within Qinghai Province after graduating from college. They visited the village several times annually and stayed only a few days.

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<sup>60</sup> There were no computers nor was there internet access in the village in January 2008.

Ninety-one villagers (fifteen families) lived year-round in Xining, where they worked as gate guards for schools, offices, and business or as street sweepers. The difficulties associated with leaving their work meant that they only visited the village during weddings and funerals and were given permission from their work units to leave for only one to three days.

On average, sixty-four men and several women left the village annually to do such seasonal employment for three to four months as goldmining in remote areas of Qinghai and construction work in Xining City.

People were eager to leave the village and work in Xining, though the pay was low and the work was dirty and hard. The attraction of a steady monthly income was greater than a life in the village dependent on an uncertain harvest, threatened by hailstorms and drought. Limusishiden asked one mother why she left the village to take up a street sweeping job in Xining with her husband. She replied, "I must support my son's university study. If I stay here, our yearly harvest isn't enough to see him through."

Villagers reported much less visiting than before and commented that they do not help each other as generously as they used to.

## CONCLUSION

We conclude with comments from Lunshinbog (Longshenbao 龙神保 b. 1923) of Jija Nuri:

Everything in the village has dramatically changed compared to the time when I was young. In my childhood, people were extremely filial to their parents, who determined everything both inside and outside the home. When a son was sent to attend a relative's wedding or funeral, he was afterwards expected to report the entire affair in great detail while kneeling on the floor in front of his parents. If a son was disobedient or mistreated his parents, his clan members beat him. A daughter-in-law could not sit on the *pei* with her husband's parents. Daughters-in-law did not eat in the main room with their father-in-law, but ate in the kitchen.

Everything has changed. Girls do not want to come to this mountain area. Instead, they want to go to cities to earn money, and later marry a man from a lowland area. A girl first considers if the prospective groom's home has old people when a matchmaker comes to propose. They believe old people will bring conflict because inter-generational conflict is common. The gap between younger and older generations is growing. Many fathers do not talk to their sons because the sons do not listen. They do everything without consulting their parents. Every old village man worries about living with his children.

Children no longer respect elders. When I walk down a village lane, children do not greet me with 'Aadee (Grandfather)' but rather 'Ai (ai 哎,Hello)'

Only old people and some women stay in the

village in summer, working the fields, and guarding the village. Only several old men still burn incense and prostrate to our village deity, Sanxiao Nengneng (Sanxiao Niangniang 三孝娘娘, a female *pram*), and guard its temple. Young people increasingly pay less respect to the deity. We worry who will continue to be responsible for the temple and deity after we die.

Loss of the Mongghul language is another serious problem. Young children can only count in Mongghul from one to three and increasingly, nobody gives Mongghul names to their children.

Mothers no longer teach embroidery to their daughters, children do not want to learn Mongghul folklore, Mongghul wedding and funeral ceremonies are increasingly simplified, and men do not wear Mongghul clothing. Women do so only during Spring Festival.

In the past all the villagers were delighted when they heard a household had a baby mule but now this feeling of joy has been replaced by jealousy.

I can't imagine what will happen to Mongghul people after I die. Everything is changing so fast.

## APPENDIX

### NEW YEAR GAMES

Children under the age of ten played *aaga aayi* 'uncles and aunts' *shushu ayi* 叔叔 阿姨. Small clods were put in lines to make a square that was regarded as a household. The square was further divided into a sleeping room, *pei* room, courtyard, corridor, and so on. The children were divided into two groups/ families. Each represented a certain family member in a household, for example, father, mother, brothers, sisters, and so on. They 'visited' each other, extended greetings, and entertained each other by pretending to serve food, imitating exactly what adults did.

During the time of Xni Sara (the New Year period 新年) some women kicked the *tiijan* 槌子 'shuttlecock' made from two Qing Dynasty coins with a small piece of cloth atop the metal coins. A hole was made in the cloth corresponding in size to the hole of the metal it covered. The ends of the cloth were put under the metal and brought through the hole in the metal and the cloth. Some colorful chicken plumes were tied with string to the cloth ends. The plumes were collected from the chickenroost, on the ground, or pulled from chickens. A butchered chicken provided a good chance to obtain many plumes. A player kicked the *tiijan* with the inside, outside, and upper part of the foot and the thigh.

*Tiijan* players divided into two groups. Players stood together and then all the players extended their hands forward, either with the palm up or the palm down. Those with palms up became one group and those with palms down became another group. This repeated until each

group was approximately the same size.

One group started to kick the *tiijan*, one player by one player until their kick numbers accumulated to a certain number, for example fifty or one hundred. The second group did the same. The group with the highest score won. Imagine that Group A won. Next, Group B tossed the *tiijan* to a player from Group A. This player kicked the *tiijan* as far into the distance as possible to prevent Group B players from catching it before the *tiijan* hit the ground. If it was caught, the kicker could not kick again—they were out of the game. The same thing happened if they missed the *tiijan* when it was tossed to them.

The player who was kicking might have chosen to not kick the *tiijan* if they felt it was not a good toss. If no one caught the *tiijan*, then the same player kicked the *tiijan* again as it was tossed to them by any of the Group B players. This continued until this player either missed the *tiijan* or a Group B player caught it. This round ended when all Group A players' kicked *tiijan* were missed or caught by Group B players. Then a new round started.

Girls and young women were fond of *tiijan* and played it in the lanes during Spring Festival.

## NON-ENGLISH TERMS

### A

*aadee* | grandfather

*aaga aayi* | (shushu ayi 叔叔阿姨), uncles and aunts

*aagu digha* | particularly refers to a boy marrying his mother's brother's daughter. Such marriages were common before 1980. It also refers to a girl marrying her father's sister's son.

*Aba* 阿巴 | (Rnga ba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture,  
Sichuan Province

*ai* | (ai 哎, hello)

*Alighuan* | (Bagushan 八古山), a village in Fulaan Nara

*Amdo* | (Anduo 安多, A mdo)

*anfu* 安抚 | military position

*Anzhog* | (*anzhao* 安召), a term used by local people to refer to a circle dance widely performed in Mongghul areas. If it is held in a household, it is done surrounding the small flower garden in the center of the courtyard or in front of the household gate if a wedding is being held. It is also performed in lanes or on threshing grounds in winter during the New Year period. Typically, one or two male singers lead the singing and dancing while others (mostly women) follow. The dancers first bend forward while swinging their arms left and right twice, then turn their bodies with their arms stretched into the air. Several songs may accompany the dance.

## B

Bali 巴里 | a village in Xunrang Township

Banjiawan 班家湾 | a village in Weiyuan Town

*bankang* 板炕 | an adobe platform located in a room used for sleeping and entertaining guests that was divided into two parts—the *yikang* and the *bankang*. A large opening was made at the *bankang* center to facilitate placing fuel (straw and animal dung) inside. Five to six wood planks covered the opening once fuel was placed inside and were removed when more fuel was needed (two days later) and to remove ash. The wife, daughters, and babies slept on the *bankang* without a bed cushion, which allowed babies' urine and excrement to easily be scraped into the *bankang*. Sleeping on a *bankang* was uncomfortable, because there was no cushion beneath the naked body and the *bankang* emitted smoke. Occasionally, babies fell between the unstable planks and were seriously burned.

Banma 班玛 | (Pad ma), a county in Gilog (Guoluo, Mgo log, Golok) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province

Baojia 包家 Pass | a Han village located halfway between Xining City and Weiyuan Town. The village lay along an old road located west of Tangchuan Valley.

Beijing 北京 | China's capital

*binkang* | ('bum khang), pavilion

*boqi* | (boji 簸箕), winnowing tray

## C

Caibog | (Caibao 财宝), a person's name

Chen Qiang 陈强 | a person's name

*chi* 尺 | unit of measure

Chileb | (Longwang Shan 龙王山), mountain range

## D

*dafatai* 大法台 | (abbot)

Dangyan | (Dongyuan 东元), the Dangyan Mountains  
separate the two groups of Tu who refer to  
themselves as Karilang and Mongghul

Danjansirang | (Li Deming 李得明), a person's name

Danma 丹麻 | the name of a township and a valley

Datong 大通 | Datong Hui and Mongghul (Tu)  
Autonomous County

Dolidighuali | (Dazigou 达子沟), a village in Fulaan Nara

Donggou 东沟 | a township

Donghe 东和 | a township

Dongshan 东山 | a township

Durijinbin | a person's name

Durishidii | (Duoshidai 多士代), a village in Taizi  
Township

## F

Fangshinbog | (Shuangshenbao 双神保), a person's name

*fu* 府 | government office

Foorijang | (Huoerjun 霍尔郡), a village in Wushi Town

Fulaan Nara | (Red Sun) | a place name

Funong 富农 | (Rich Man), a category assigned during the  
Land Reform Movement in the case cited in the  
text, in 1951-1952

*fuuda* | (long bag) a woolen bag used for grain

## G

Gannan 甘南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu  
Province

Gansu 甘肃 Province

Gasangdanquenima 噶桑丹却尼玛 | (Thu'u kwan skal  
bzang dam chos nyi ma), the Seventh Tughuan  
Living Buddha (1898-1959)

*ghadani dog* | mountain songs, love songs

Gilog | (Guoluo 果洛 Mgo log), an autonomous Tibetan prefecture in Qinghai Province

Colmud | (Geermu 格尔木), a city in Qinghai Province

## H

Haibei 海北 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Haidong 海东 Region

Hainan 海南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Haixi 海西 Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Halazhigou 哈拉直沟 | a township

Haliqi | an area consisting of Danma Town; Donggou, Dongshan 东山, Donghe 东和, Taizi 台子, and Wufeng 五峰 townships; and Weiyuan 威远 Town

Ha Mingzong 哈明宗 | a person's name

Han 汉 | a nationality in China

Hara Bulog | (Heiquan 黑泉), a village in Donggou Township

Henan 河南 Province

Hongyazigou 红崖子沟 | a township

*hua'er* 花儿 | songs that often feature romantic content

*huangsa* | pipe for smoking tobacco

Huangyuan 湟源 County | in Xining City

Huangzhong 湟中 County | in Xining City

Huhehaote 呼和浩特 City | the capital of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region

Hui 回 | an Islamic nationality in China

*huida yiri* | a woman who has been married more than once

*hurin-shzin* | twenty-nine; a festival held in Tughuan Village, Wushi Town

*huujang* | weavers

*huujazi* | looms

Huzhu 互助 Mongghul (Tu) Autonomous County

J

Janba | (Wangjia 汪家), a village, in Danma Town

Jija Nuri | (Jijialing 吉家岭), a village in Dongshan Town

Jilog | (Jiaolu 角落), a village in Danma Town

*Jingli banaogao maigei* | (*Jingli bawoge maigei* 经理把我  
个卖给, shop assistant make-me-to sell-to.) A  
miscommunication occurred between the shop  
assistants and Mongghul shoppers. The shop  
assistant understood this to mean, "I want to sell  
myself to you," though the customer meant "Shop  
assistant, can I buy such-and-such a thing?"

*Jingli tiuqi you mo you?* | (*Jingli tiuqi you mei you* 经理扫  
帚有没有? Can I buy a broom?" *Tiuqi* is Mongghul  
for broom, and the remaining is local Chinese  
dialect. Such questions puzzled the Han shop  
assistants.

Jingyang 景阳 | a township in Datong Hui and Mongghul  
(Tu) Autonomous County

Jiraqog | a person's name

Jiushidengunbu | (Shug ldan mgon po), a deity in Bahong  
Village, Wushi Town

Jiuti | (Jiaotou 教头), a village in Fulaan Nara

Jiuyahua | (Qi Haiyan 祁海燕), a person's name

Jiuyansuu | a person's name

Jiuzhi 久治 | (Gcig sgril), a county in Gilog (Guoluo, Mgo  
log, Golok) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai  
Province

Joni | (Zhuoni 卓尼), a county in Gannan Tibetan  
Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province

Jughuari (Zhuoke 卓科) | a village in Wushi Town

Jugui | (Lu Wanfang 鲁万芳), a person's name

## K

Karilang | a term used by Fulaan Nara residents to refer to themselves (rather than 'Mongghul')

Keke 柯柯 | a town in Wulan County, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

## L

Labrang | (Labuleng 拉卜楞, Bla brang), a Tibetan monastery, located in Xiahe County, Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province

Lamuduriji | a person's name

Lamuniruu | a person's name

*langang* | (low wall). Mongghul used a *pei* in the kitchen that was divided into two parts by the *langang*. One part was for cooking and the other half was the *pei*, a raised platform where the family slept at night using fur-lined robes as quilts and where they entertained guests with food, liquor, and conversation.

Langja | (Langjia 浪加), a village in Wushi Town

Lanzhou 兰州 City | the capital of Gansu Province

*laosi naojia yigao hui* | (*laoshi wojia yige hui* 老师我家一个回; teacher I home one back), an example of Chinese spoken by a Mongghul

*laxjang* | a coarse garment

Ledu 乐都 County | in Haidong Region

Li Jinwang 李晋王 | (856-908), a Tang Dynasty general

Liminsuu | (Li Mengsuo 李梦索), a person's name

Limudanzhuu | (Li Deqing 李得庆), a person's name

Limudiinjiri | a person's name

Limuduriji | a person's name

Limujansan | a person's name

Limusirang | a person's name

Limushishiden | (Li Dechun 李得春), a person's name

Limuzhunmaa | a person's name

Lirija | a person's name

Liu 刘 | a surname

Luijia 柳家 | a village in Danma Town

Lughuari | (Dacaizigou 大菜子沟) Village, Taizi Township

Lunshinbog | (Longshenbao 龙神保), a person's name

Luosangladan 罗桑拉丹| (Blo bzang la brtan), a person's name

## M

Ma 马 | a surname

Mantuu | (Mantou 曼头), a small lamasery located in Danma Town

Mao 毛 | Mao suit (*Zhongshang zhuang* 中山裝)

Menyuan 门源 County | in Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

*minban* 民办 teachers with unofficial positions and paid a small salary

Ming Dynasty 明朝 | 1368-1644)

Minhe 民和 Hui and Tu Autonomous County | in Haidong Region

Minkari | a person's name

*modaya* | (*maodaye* 猫大爷) behave as do spirits and ghosts.

They are often found in rich homes where they are faithful and loyal. They steal grain and bring it to the granaries of their masters, and make people ill if they take something from their masters' homes.

Mongghul | (Tu 土族 Monguor, Mangghuer), citizens of China, much influenced by Tibetan Buddhism, share Mongolic-based lexical items, and live primarily in Huzhu, Datong, Ledu, Menyuan, and Minhe counties in Qinghai Province as well as Tianzhu County, Gansu Province

*mu* 亩 | unit of land measurement; one hectare equals fifteen *mu*

## N

- Nangsuo | (Angsuo 昂琐; Nang so), 'internal affairs officer' position granted by upper level Tibetan religious authorities to Mongghul during the Ming Dynasty  
Nanmenxia 南门峡 | a township in Huzhu County  
Nanshan 南山 | (South Mountain), in Ledu County  
Nengneng | (Niangniang 娘娘), female deity  
*ni banao deng zhao* | (*ni deng zhao wo* 你等着我) you wait for me; an example of local, Chinese dialect  
Niidosirang | (Li Deyuan 李得元), a person's name  
Niiga | a person's name  
Ningxia 宁夏 Hui Autonomous Region  
*niudaari* | traditional Mongghul headdress for women  
Niuqi | (Liushuigou 流水沟), a village in Fulaan Nara  
Njaa | (Wenjia 温家), a village in Danma Town  
*njası* | plough

## P

- pei* | (shao kang 烧炕), an adobe platform traditionally built in Mongghul kitchens where families slept, drank, ate, and entertained guests  
Ping'an 平安 County | in Haidong Region  
Pochumixin 破除迷信 | Do Away With Superstition Movement  
*poniangzhang* 婆娘账 | Mongghul number symbols  
*pram* | a deity represented in the form of a sedaned image or a cloth-covered pole held by four men or a man, respectively  
Pudang | (Pudonggou 普洞沟), a village in Danma Town  
Puriji | a person's name

## Q

- Qan | ('cham), the Rgulang Monastery Masked Dance Festival  
Qiizi Dog | (Noodle Song), a wedding song once sung

when the banquet and related activities neared an end in the bride's home  
Qilian 祁连 County | in Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture  
Qilunbog | a person's name  
Qing Dynasty 清朝 | (1644-1911)  
Qinghai 青海 Province  
Qishihua | a person's name  
Qiyansuu | a person's name  
Qumalai 曲麻莱 | (Chu dmar leb), a county in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

## R

rangpi | (*niangpi* 酿皮) a local snack made from wheat flour and potato starch  
Ren Xiuzhi 任秀智 | a person's name  
Rgulang | (Youningsi 佑宁寺; Dgon lung dgon pa) a large Tibetan lamasery in northeastern Qinghai Province  
RMB | (*renminbi* 人民币), Chinese money  
Rngui Aadee | Rngui Grandfather  
Rnqan | a person's name  
Rnqanhua | a person's name  
Rnqaxji | a person's name

## S

Saihua | a person's name  
Saina 赛娜 | may be translated as 'good' but in this book it refers to a Mongghul village in Keke Town, Wulan County, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture where resettled Mongghul live.  
Sangjixji | a person's name  
Sanxiao Nengneng | (Sanxiao Niangniang 三孝娘娘), a female deity  
Schin | a person's name  
Shanghai 上海 Municipality

Shaanxi 山西 Province

*shaonian* 少年 | love songs that may be explicitly sexual,

consequently, it is taboo to sing them in the home

Shaowa 勺哇 | a Tu area in Zhuoni County, Gannan

Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province

Shdangja | (Dongjia 东家), a village in Danma Town

Shdara | (Dala 达拉), a Mongghul township in Ledu County

*shge* | big

Shgeayili | (Dazhuang 大庄), a village in Donggou Township

Shgeayil Mula Surghual | (Dazhuang xiaoxue 大庄小学), Dazhuang Primary School. A notice atop a column in front of Dazhuang Primary School, Donggou Township was written in Mongghul and Chinese characters. The Mongghul written system was taught in Huzhu Mongghul areas from 1997 to 2002.

Sichuan 四川 Province

*Sifu, naonizi toushang zuogaoha lai* | (*shifu wo zuodao ni touli xingma* 师傅我坐到你头里行吗?) Driver, can I sit on your head, please?), an example of how old Mongghul spoke Chinese.

Sishijinsuu | a person's name

Smeen | (Ximi 西米), a village in Fulaan Nara

Snsari | (Xin Ang 新昂), a village in Fulaan Nara

Songde 松德 | a village in Danma Town

Songduo 松多 | a township in Huzhu County

Srangsuu | (Li Sirang 李思让), a person's name

Srangxji | a person's name

*suurishidi* | a stone-soil structure that that is thought to prevent hailstones and disease in Mongghul villages

Szanghuali | (Nianxian 念先), a village in Donggou Township

# T

Taizi 台子 | a township in Huzhu County

*taligha* | (rtsam pa, *zanba* 糟粑) roasted highland barley flour

Tang Dynasty 唐朝 | (618-907)

Tangchuan 塘川 | a town in Huzhu County

Taraalidighuali | (Changgou 长沟), a village in Fulaan Nara

Tianjin 天津 Municipality

Tianjun 天峻 | a county in Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

*tiijan* 罂子 | shuttlecock

Tirijiijinbu | (Thu'u ru gcen po), a deity in Tughuan Village, Wushi Town

Tu 土 | (Monguor, Mongghul, Mangghuer)

Tudigaige 土地改革 | Land Reform Movement

Tughuan | (Tuguan 土官), a title of a position established by the fourth Dalai Lama that was held by Mongghul and Tibetans and abolished in 1930. Nowadays it only refers to Tughuan villages in Danma and Wushi towns.

Tughuan Hurin-Shzin | (Tughuan Twenty-Nine), a festival held in Tughuan Village, Wushi Town

Tuhun 吐浑 | a Mongghul village in Xunrang Township, Datong Hui and Mongghul Autonomous County

*tusi* 土司 | (native chief), the *tusi* system was an administrative system used in Mongol, Tibetan, and other minority areas in northwest and southwest China during the Yuan 元 (1206-1368), Ming, and Qing 清 (1636-1911) dynasties. The government designated tribal officials and allowed them to govern their own ethnic peoples.

## U

Uygur | (Weiwer 维吾尔) Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region; the Uygur are one of China's 56 officially recognized ethnic groups

## W

Wang Baochuan 王宝钏 | a person's name

Weiyuan 威远 | the seat of Huzhu County and, administratively, a town

Wufeng 五峰 | a township in Huzhu County

Wughuang | (Bahong 巴洪), a village in Fulaan Nara

Wughuangmiile | (Wu hong mi la), a deity in Wughuang Village, Wushi Town

Wulan 乌兰 | a county in Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Wushi 五十 | a town in Huzhu County

## X

Xangri | (Shenlu 神路) a village in Fulaan Nara

Xangshida | (Shangshida 尚示大) a village in Danma Town

*xashiduu* | white-colored stones; Mongghul burned such stones, ground the bits into fine powder, and took a spoonful daily to treat stomach pain

Xewarishidi | (Shibadonggou 十八洞沟; Xiawaer 夏哇尔), a village in Fulaan Nara

*xian* 县 | county

Xiahe 夏河 County | in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province

Xining 西宁 City | capital of Qinghai Province

Xinjiang 新疆 Uygur Autonomous Region

Xni Sara | the New Year period

*xriga naa* | hepatitis

*Xriga ruguwu? Ruguwa!* | (Liver repositioning? Repositioned!) Healer's words when treating such liver ailments as hepatitis. A patient adjusted their

sash so it was around the abdomen at the top of their liver covering the painful area. A healer rubbed the patient's lower back, gradually working their hands to the front of the patient, rubbed over the liver area, and then moved their hands up to the chest. While doing this, they said, "Xriga ruguwu? Ruguwa! Liver repositioning? Repositioned!" The area was massaged in the morning, at noon, and again at night. During the rubbing, the patient was told to stretch out their big toes and thumbs and to raise and lower their head repeatedly.

*xuanfu* 宣抚 | military rank

*xuanwei* 宣慰 | military rank

Xue Pinggui 薛平贵 | a person's name

Xue Rengui 薛仁贵 | a person's name

Xunbu 遂布 | a Mongghul village in Datong Hui and Mongghul (Tu) Autonomous County

Xunhua 循化 Salar Autonomous County | a county in Haidong Region

Xunrang 遂让 | a township in Datong Hui and Mongghul (Tu) Autonomous County

## Y

*yikang* | an adobe platform in the home used for sleeping, sitting, eating, and entertaining guests

Yomajaa | (Yaoma 姚麻), a village in Donggou Township

Yuan Dynasty 元朝 | (1206-1308)

*yuan* 元 | Chinese currency

Yushu 玉树 (Yul shul) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

## Z

Zangdii | a person's name

Zanghua | (Sangshige 桑士哥, a village in Fulaan Nara

Zangshou 藏寿 | a village in Fulaan Nara

Zhade 扎德 | a village in Danma Town

*zhifu* 知府 | civil service position  
Zhinzan | a person's name  
*zhixian* 知县 | a civil service position  
*zhizhou* 知州 | a civil service position  
*zhou* 州 | a prefecture  
Zhuashidi | (Zhuashitu 抓什图, Baizhade 白扎德, Zhade 扎德, or Baizhuazi 白抓子), a village in Danma Town  
Zhunmaahua | a person's name  
Zhunmaasangqan | (Sgrol ma seng chen), a deity in Zhuashidi Village, Danma Town  
Zhunmaasu | a person's name

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